

Capture Oakville 2026

Competition Rules & Process

Eligibility:

- ✓ Entrants must be residents of the province of Ontario.
- ✓ Entrants to the Capture Oakville Photography Competition under the age of 18, require a guardian to sign their Entry Form.
- ✓ This competition is open to photographers of all levels.
- ✓ All submissions must be accompanied by a completed Official Entry Form ([link here](#)).

Competition Process and Timing:

The Oakville Camera Club (OCC) has a two-(2) step submission process for the Capture Oakville 2026 Competition, which includes:

- ✓ Step 1 - Electronic Submission and Pre-Selection Screening – Entrants submit digital Images, which are reviewed and pre-selected for category and technical qualifications.
- ✓ Step 2 - Printed Image Submission and Judging – after Images are selected via Step 1, Entrants must submit printed Images. Printed images are judged and curate during this step; category and overall winners are selected.

Key Dates:

- ✓ Photo Eligibility – Images must have been taken between January 1, 2025, and March 1, 2026 (with the exception of the Moments that Endure category)
- ✓ Competition Opens – February 2, 2026
- ✓ Electronic Submissions Due (Step 1) – March 2, 2026
- ✓ Print Image Submission Notifications – March 19, 2026
- ✓ Print Image Submissions Due (Step 2) – March 23, 2026, and April 7, 2026, drop offs
- ✓ Gala and Awards Ceremony – May 22, 2026
- ✓ Print Images Displayed at OCC – May 21, 2026 – June 2027
- ✓ Print Images Available for Purchase – Fall 2027 or Spring 2028 (to be confirmed)

Competition Categories:

The Streets of Oakville

- ✓ An Image that captures and illustrates the interaction of people, their behaviors, the environment in public places and/or a realistic “decisive moment” (see [FAQ](#) for definition), within the Town of Oakville.
- ✓ Though people may feature directly, the photograph could be absent of people and can be of any object or environment within Oakville that projects a decidedly human character.
- ✓ Images entered into *The Streets of Oakville* category must be taken within the geographical confines of the Town of Oakville, Ontario. This aspect is judged during Step 1 (Pre-Selection Screening.) At least 1 member of the organizing committee or club CAPA trained members must recognize the Image as within the geographical confines of the Town of Oakville, Ontario.

People & Portraits

- ✓ A compelling portrait photograph that illustrates the moment of contact or interaction, while accentuating the essential characteristics and personality of the human spirit.
- ✓ Photographs can include Candid or Posed, Portraiture, Studio, Photojournalism, or Street Photography, as long as the human element being photographed is the central element.

Black & White

- ✓ This category challenges photographers to provide an Image that goes beyond color and uses the aesthetic of the medium of black and white, to emphasize the interplay of light, shadow, texture, and form, to craft compelling visual narratives.
- ✓ The Image should showcase the photographer’s mastery of tonal range, contrast, and composition, creating black-and-white Images that enhance the subject's impact.
- ✓ Black & White is defined as shades of very dark grey (black) to very light grey (white) with varying shades (darker) and tints (light) of the grayscale.
- ✓ This category is open to any subject matter.

Landscapes

- ✓ A compelling natural landscape, cityscape, spectacular natural event, or environmental vista Image, which conveys the scale, size or proportion of what is being photographed.
- ✓ The Image may include methods such as wide-format panoramic field-of-view, focus stacking, and High Dynamic Range (HDR) techniques.

Nature & Wildlife

- ✓ A compelling Image of natural elements such as wildlife, plants, insects, and close-ups of (or parts of) small natural subjects or textures.
- ✓ Macro photographs (of nature) are welcome in this category.
- ✓ Hand-of-Man elements are ‘permitted,’ as long as they are minimal and do not detract from the primary subject matter.

Exploration

- ✓ This category is open to creative and innovative Images that explore new personal directions in the art or science of photography and result in compelling Images with strong visual and/or emotional impact.
- ✓ These Images go beyond simple documentation to evoke emotion, explore concepts, or challenge perspectives. The photographer must demonstrate deliberate creativity that transforms the subject beyond a mere representation of reality.
- ✓ Any subject matter or technique may be used. Images will be evaluated on their creativity, impact and inventive application of photographic principles and techniques.

Moments that Endure - 20th Anniversary Edition (NEW Category)

- ✓ To commemorate 20 years of Capture Oakville, this special category celebrates the power of storytelling through photography. Submit an image that evokes emotion, reveals a narrative, or captures a moment that invites the viewer to imagine the story behind it.
- ✓ Photographs may portray any subject—people, places, objects, or abstract forms—so long as they convey a compelling sense of story, mood, or meaning through composition, light, and timing.
- ✓ Images in this category may be colour or black and white. The emphasis should be on visual storytelling, emotional resonance, and the photographer's ability to communicate through imagery.
- ✓ Eligible images may have been taken at any time within the past 20 years, provided they have **not** been entered in any previous photo competition of any type.
- ✓ *NOTE: requirements for eligibility date (within January 1, 2025 – March 1, 2026, and the submission of EXIF data do not apply to this category.*

Competition Rules

1) General Rules

a) General Submission Rules

- i) For the purposes of this competition, a Photographic Image (or "Image") is defined as being "a captured Image on a light-sensitive device (e.g. film camera, digital camera, smartphone, tablet, etc.) and recorded on film or in a digital format."
- ii) Prior to submitting any Image into the Capture Oakville competition, all Entrants must first read the Competition Rules and Eligibility Criteria relating to their Image submission(s).
- iii) For the purposes of this competition, the Entrant must retain the original un-retouched JPEG or the RAW file.
- iv) The Image must be the original work of the Entrant and must not contain elements created or captured by someone else (see Photo Editing and Artificial Intelligence Considerations for details below.)
- v) Other than the Black & White category, images in all categories may be colour or black and white.

- vi) The Image is not allowed to contain any watermarks such as name of the Image, or name of the photographer, or identifying markings that would indicate or disclose the photographer, and/or the name of the camera club.
 - vii) A maximum total of seven (7) Images may be entered into the Competition per Entrant (i.e., equivalent to one (1) Image in each Category).
 - viii) Capture Oakville Images are displayed at Queen Elizabeth Park Community and Cultural Centre for one (1) full year. Due to framing limitations and process, the Images are retained onsite for another year. Images will be available for purchase roughly two (2) years after the Capture competition in which the Image was submitted.
- b) Photo Original Location
- i) Images entered into The Streets of Oakville category must be taken within the geographical confines of the Town of Oakville, Ontario.
 - ii) Images entered into all other categories may be taken anywhere in the world.
- c) Photo Original Capture Date
- i) The Image(s) must have been taken between: 1 January 2025 and 1 March 2026 with the exception of submissions to the Moment's that Endure category (see category rules.)
 - ii) Images taken outside the specified time period will be automatically disqualified.
- d) Submission Forms and Release
- i) Each submission must be accompanied by the completed Entry Form. The Entry Form is available [online here](#). Submission of the Entry form confirms the Entrant has read and agreed to these rules.
 - ii) Submissions are only accepted online via the Oakville Camera Club website.
- e) Ownership, Indemnity & Responsibilities
- i) Entrants remain solely responsible for their submissions. By entering the competition, the photographer warrants that:
 - (1) They are the creator and copyright holder of the Image(s).
 - (2) They have obtained all necessary rights, licenses, consents, and releases (including verbal consent or a model releases where applicable) for any individuals depicted. A sample model release form is available [online here](#) for use at Entrant's discretion.
 - (3) The Image(s) do not infringe any copyright, moral rights, privacy, publicity rights, or any other rights of a third party.
 - ii) Submissions must not contravene Canadian law.
 - (1) Images depicting individuals in vulnerable, compromising, or intimate situations — including, but not limited to, voyeurism, nudity, sexual activity, or circumstances that may reasonably be considered an invasion of privacy — are strictly prohibited.
 - (2) Any entry found to violate these standards will be immediately disqualified, and the entrant may be reported to the appropriate authorities.
 - iii) Entrants agree to indemnify and hold harmless OCC, its officers, members, judges, and affiliates from any and all claims, actions, demands, damages, or liabilities arising out of or related to the submitted Images.
 - iv) OCC acts solely as the organizer of the competition and does not assume responsibility for verifying the existence or validity of releases or consents. The OCC will not be held liable for any legal claims, disputes, or damages resulting from the use, exhibition, publication, or promotion of submitted images.

2) Photo Editing and Artificial Intelligence Considerations

a) Artificial Intelligence

- i) In the Capture Oakville Entry Form, the competition requires the Entrant to confirm understanding of, and agree to the following:
 - (1) An Artificial Intelligence (AI) generated Image is not valid for submission because it was created by an AI system and contains no or limited original Image captured by the Entrant.
 - (2) Use of AI features contained within a post processing application (e.g. masking, sharpening, de-noise, enlarging, etc.) are permitted provided they comply with the competition's Permitted Editing criteria (below), and do not contain any elements which were not directly captured by the Entrant, as per Editing Techniques Not Permitted (e.g. texture, sky, etc.); and,

b) Permitted Editing

- i) All In-camera Techniques: Any adjustments made directly within the camera during Image capture.
- ii) On-Camera Techniques: Utilizing on-camera features and settings for Image enhancements.
- iii) Post-processing Techniques: Editing the Image using post-processing software, subject to considerations included in Editing Techniques Not Permitted (below).
- iv) All elements of the final photograph must have been captured by the Entrant. For instance, sky replacement and other content layers/replacement/additions are allowed, but the replacement sky/layer or other elements must have been captured by the same photographer submitting the Image into this competition.

c) Editing Techniques Not Permitted

- i) Frames or Borders: Photograph must not contain any decorative elements like frames, borders, pin-lines, or edges (edges or markings from scanned film Images.)
- ii) AI Renderings: as outlined above, submitted Images that have been created or modified using specific AI generative techniques are not permitted for entry into this competition.
- iii) Images that have been created or modified using specific AI generative techniques, such as in-painting (where AI fills in generated elements not captured by the photographer) and/or out-painting (where the AI extends beyond the original boundaries using AI generated elements), whether with or without text prompts, are not permitted for submission into this competition.
- iv) No additive textures, or significant compositing of elements that are not originally present in the captured Image (Explorations category is exempt from this rule.)

d) Right to Request Originals

- i) The Competitions Chair has the right to request and receive the original un-retouched JPEG or RAW file for the purposes of verifying competition compliance.

3) Ownership & Copyright:

- a) The Entrant retains ownership and copyright of his/her own Images submitted to this contest, or competitions conducted by the Oakville Camera Club.
- b) The OCC has ownership of the specific print that is submitted to the competition. The Entrant has the right to purchase the matted Image at the end of the specified period – see General Rules d) viii.

- c) Upon submission of any photo entry, Entrants expressly agree to, and grant consent to the Oakville Camera Club's rights of use, to copy, adapt, transmit, communicate, publicly display and perform, distribute and publicize submitted Images for the non-commercial purpose of promoting its club, website, competitions and/or OCC events.
- d) All Images, either print or digital, will be credited to the photographer.
- e) Images that are disqualified from the competition by Oakville Camera Club, will not be used, and will be destroyed.
- f) Entrants irrevocably agree and consent to:
 - i) Oakville Camera Club's use and retention of submitted prints and digital Images for the non-commercial purpose of display, exhibition, promotion, marketing, and fund-raising for its competitions and/or OCC;
- g) Prints selected for framing and exhibition become, and remain, the property of OCC for archive and exhibition purposes.
- h) The sale of matted/framed and exhibited prints by OCC are to promote the works of the Entrants, and to raise funds for OCC to help sustain Capture Oakville in future years.

4) Submission Process and Rules:

- a) Two Step Submission Process
 - i) The Oakville Camera Club conducts a two-step submission process for the Capture Oakville 2025 Competition.
 - (1) Step 1 - Electronic Submission and Pre-Selection Screening – Entrants submit digital Images, which are reviewed and pre-selected for category and technical qualifications.
 - (2) Step 2 - Printed Image Submission and Judging – having been selected via Step 1, Entrants are requested to submit printed Images, which will be judged for category and overall winners, and to be exhibited during the Gala and following year.
 - ii) A panel of independent, non-club, CAPA certified professionals, will judge both steps in the process, including electronic and print images.
 - iii) The judges' decisions shall be final.
- b) Step 1 - Electronic Submission and Pre-Selection Screening
 - i) Entry fees must be paid and Images must be submitted by the specified due date of March 2, 2026
 - ii) The Capture Oakville Entry must include:
 - (1) Official Entry Form including:
 - (a) The photographers (Entrants) name.
 - (b) Contact phone number.
 - (c) File name of each Image entered.
 - (d) Name of the Category that each Image is entered into.
 - (2) Full payment made through PayPal, Apple Pay, credit card, or G Pay via the submission portal at <https://www.oakvillecameraclub.com/capture-entry>.
 - (a) Entry Fees and Payment:
 - (i) \$15 for the first Image entered.
 - (ii) \$15 for each additional Image entered.
 - (b) up to a total of seven-(7) Images may be entered into the Competition.

- iii) All Images must be submitted in an electronic format and must be provided as a file upload using the Capture Oakville Entry interface, which can be found at www.oakvillecameraclub.com.
 - iv) The Image submitted must be in a high-resolution digital JPEG format
 - v) File Size must be greater than 250 KB and less than 60 MB - as the digital version will be viewed, screened and judged on a high quality 'colour-calibrated' monitor, based on the submitted quality.
 - vi) All JPEG Images entered into the competition must include the original metadata (i.e, EXIF) imbedded with the Image (with the exception of images submitted to the Moments that Ensure category if EXIF data was not available at the time). Images with no or substantially incomplete or altered EXIF data will automatically be disqualified.
 - vii) All Images must be processed in the proper orientation (i.e., portrait or landscape) for viewing.
 - viii) Files are to be named according to the camera club naming convention, as follows:
 - (1) Title of Image _ Name of Photographer.jpg - (i.e., Rideau_Canal-JohnSmith.jpg)
 - (a) Do Not include blank spaces in the file name, or any of the following figures such as punctuation marks, special characters, quotation marks, or symbols such as / \ , ; : " " " ! ? & \$ % * { } [] @ # & () in your Image File name.
 - (b) The Image's title will be used by the judges in evaluating your submission.
 - (c) Entrants should take care in selecting a title that complements or contributes to communicating the vision or message being presented in the Image - the title will be shown prior to, or during, the adjudication process.
- c) Step 2 – Printed Image Submission and Judging
- i) Once Step 1 – the Electronic Submission and Pre-Selection Screening process is complete, the Entrants will be notified their Image(s) have been selected for the Step 2 – the Print Image Submission phase of the competition.
 - (1) Only photographers of "selected" Images will be notified via email, that they need to submit a printed Image for the Framed Exhibition. Therefore, only "selected" Images will need to be printed, and submitted.
 - (2) Target date for selected Image notification is March 19th, 2026.
 - ii) The Entrants will be required to provide the printed Image(s) within the following specifications:
 - (a) Image Print Size: Entries must be based on the size specification of a 16" x 20" print on high-quality paper (excluding the white border). Images may have any aspect ratio the Entrant chooses.
 - (i) The physical dimensions of the printed Image area can be any size from 4" x 4" up to a maximum of 16" x 20" size.
 - (ii) The print will then be custom matted and mounted inside a 20" x 24" frame for display purposes.
 - (iii) This allows the photographer the flexibility and diversity to present their Image in the size, format and aspect ratio that best exemplifies their artwork.
 - (iv) For matting purposes, it is recommended that you do not print to the full size of the papers edge, and that a white / unprinted border be left around the outer edges of the printed area.

- (v) Images printed outside the specified dimensions will be disqualified and removed from the Exhibition.
 - (b) No visible information, watermarks, or logos, or added identifying marks, may be placed, or appear on the front of the Image 'post-capture,' other than those that have been encompassed by the original Image capture itself.
- iii) The only Image alterations allowed after the Electronic Submission phase, are for print sizing, sharpening and printer / paper profile application.
 - (a) Printed Images will be reviewed for possible alterations prior to final judging. Any obvious alterations beyond what is allowed, may result in the Print Image being disqualified.
- iv) The Print Image must be received no later than April 7th, 2026. Details for print drop off will be provided in the notification email. Unless outlined otherwise, entries may be dropped off at regular Oakville Camera Club meetings (dates will be specified):
 - (a) OCC Meeting Location - drop off only at OCC Member Meetings between 6:30 and 9:00 PM at Queen Elizabeth Park Community and Cultural Centre, 2302 Bridge Road, Oakville, ON
- v) Printed Image Submission – all Print Entries must be delivered in a sealed envelope and must include:
 - (a) A copy of the completed Entry Form.
 - (b) Up to seven (7) 16" x 20" prints; [i.e., if you were selected in one (1) category, you submit one (1) print, two (2) categories, then you would submit two (2) prints, and so on].
 - (c) Identification of each Image with your Name, Category and Image Title printed legibly on the BACK of your photographic print, including:
 - (i) Name of the Entrant (photographer).
 - (ii) Title of the Image submission.
 - (iii) Orientation of the Print (i.e., an arrow pointing up).
 - (iv) Do not staple labels or place adhesive labels on the back of the photograph.
 - (v) Use a medium-point black marker. If using a ballpoint pen be sure to do so gently (pressing hard will show through on the front of the print). Be sure to indicate your print's orientation, including an identifying arrow to indicate the top of your Print Image.
- vi) Following the judging, each Image will be framed by OCC for display purposes and presentation in the Gallery as part of the Capture Oakville Photography Exhibition.
- vii) Winners: Winning entries will be announced at the Gala Night on May 22nd, 2026 from 7 PM to 9 PM, at Town of Oakville - Queen Elizabeth Park Community and Cultural Centre at 2302 Bridge Road, Oakville ON.

Questions regarding the Official Entry Rules, or questions related to your individual entry may be directed via e-mail to info@captureoakville.com.