

# MAC Astrophoto Contest Rules

[Modified June 2022]

**Effective Date:** These rules shall take effect on July 12, 2022 and shall remain in effect until modified in accordance with the Organization's procedure for modifying "Rules of Order".

**Contest Operation:** The MAC Astrophoto Contest is run by the Astrophoto Coordinator.

## Goals:

- encourage members to photograph, image, or sketch the sky and enter those images
- provide an environment to encourage experimentation and the exchange of information
- provide friendly competition to stimulate improvement

## CONTEST RULES

1. All entrants must be **current members** of the Organization and in **good standing** with **dues paid**. **Entries are due 7 p.m. Eastern Time on Sunday previous to the MAC meeting.** If your entry is late, it will be submitted to the next seasonal photo contest (except the November run off).
2. Any entry must have been taken and/sketched by the member within the two (2) years prior to the date of the contest being entered.
3. An entry may be entered in competition until it has won with a maximum of 2 tries. Once an image has won, it cannot be entered into competition again.
4. Entrants are limited to three (3) entries per category per contest.
5. There are no limitations as to image base, camera or telescope.
6. Each entry must also have submitted a Google online Astrophoto Contest entry form. Each entrant should review the Astrophoto Rules prior to the date of the contest. This is the **ONLY** way to submit and entry. Paper forms are no longer valid for submission.

## JUDGING:

- Each category will be judged separately.
- Selection of a winning entry in each category shall be by a vote of the current Organization members present. If there are 5 or more entries in a category, then a runner up may also be selected.
- In case of a tie, a single runoff shall be held between the entries with the highest number of votes. If the runoff results in a tie, the tied entries shall be declared joint winners.
- Winning entries from each quarter's contest (spring, summer, fall) will be entered into the Grand Finale Contest held at the end of the year (usually in Nov).
- **In the case of a rules dispute, the Astrophoto Coordinator shall make the final decision.**

CATEGORIES	PRINT (Lights On)	PROJECTED (Lights Out)
Novice	√	√
Cell Phone	√	√
Single Exposure Unguided	√	√
Single Exposure Guided (Unstacked, Limited Processing)	√	√
Open (No Restrictions)	√	√
Animation/Video (No Restrictions)		√
Stacked Video (Stacked, Processed)	√	√
Astronomical Sketch (any medium not involving digital or film photography i.e. graphite, inks, paint)	√	√

Each Category has two sub-categories. These sub-categories are based on the method in which the image is displayed. Prints comprise one sub-category. Projected images comprise the other sub-category. Movies, slides, computer projections of TIF or JPEG images are all to be judged in the same sub category of the main category.

<b>Novice</b> Examples: subject matter is open	Any MAC member may enter the novice class any number of times provided he/she has not won a previous MAC Astrophoto Contest in any class. No other restrictions apply.
<b>Cell Phone</b>	Cell phones used to capture astronomical images: any method of image capture or processing is acceptable, (i.e. handheld or mounted to telescope, stacked or single-shot).
<b>Single Exposure Unguided</b> Examples: satellites, star trails, conjunctions, sun/moon rise/set, eclipse, aurora, etc	Entries in this category <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b><i>Must be composed of a SINGLE image or frame.</i></b> Processing may be used to enhance features or otherwise improve the image. Colorization may not be used. That is Black and White images or frames must be shown as Black and White images and color images must be shown in color.</li> <li>Must have been taken without the assistance of any mechanical device for moving the camera during the exposure period. A photo taken using a telescope (i.e., piggybacked) or similar instrument with its clock drive disabled would qualify.</li> </ul>
<b>Single Exposure Guided</b> Examples: wide field constellation portraits, deep sky, comets	Entries in this category <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b><i>Must be composed of a SINGLE image or frame.</i></b> Limited processing may be used to enhance features or otherwise improve the image. Colorization may not be used. That is Black and White images or frames must be shown as Black and White images and color must be shown in color.</li> <li><b><i>Subject matter is open, but traditionally, images are taken with longer exposures utilizing the drive mechanism of a telescope.</i></b></li> </ul>
<b>Open</b> Examples: wide field constellation portraits, deep sky images, comets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Entries in this category may be taken, processed or altered in any way. There are no limitations with the sole exception of the way in which they were altered, processed or changed shall be included as part of the entry form.</li> </ul>
<b>Animation/Video</b> Example: Video of moving comet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any sequence of motion, displayed in any “lights out” manner including computer or projector.</li> </ul>
<b>Stacked Video</b> Examples: Planetary, Lunar, Solar, Comets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Images in this category will typically consist of brighter celestial objects, such as the sun, moon, and planets. Entries in this category can be of any body located within the solar system, but outside of low Earth orbit.</li> <li><b><i>Webcams typically used</i></b></li> <li><b><i>Multiple exposures per second (multiple exposure times of less than one second).</i></b></li> <li>There are no limitations to the method in which the entries are processed.</li> </ul>
<b>Astronomical Sketch</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sketches are judged based on neatness, accuracy, and aesthetics of the object(s) viewed by the eye and/or through the eyepiece at the time of the sketch. Sketches made from reference photos and/or online telescopes are not permitted.</li> <li>It is acceptable to clean up sketches in brighter light after an observing session (remove smudges, correct elongated stars, etc.) with or without digital manipulation. Embellishing images is not permitted (i.e. adding objects that do not exist in the sketch).</li> </ul>

Image files should be named to represent the image contained therein and the date of the image and the category. For example, if an image is of M31 taken on April 1, 2005, the file should be named as OPEN\_M31\_April\_1\_2005. The image name shall be included on the Astrophoto Entry Form.

Slides shall be labeled so that they may be placed in the slide projector in the proper orientation. The labeling should include, “TOP” and “Toward Screen (TS).