Guidelines for Digital Image Preparation

In order to submit an optimized image for judging, it is important to take the highest quality picture possible with your particular digital camera. You can always downsize or down-sample your images later, but you cannot up-sample without losing detail.
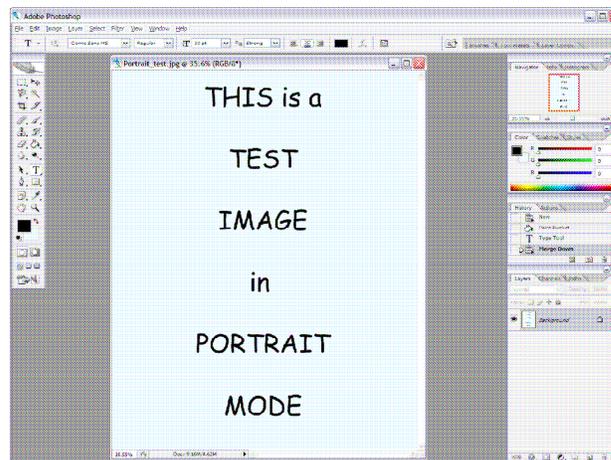
- Familiarize yourself with your camera's settings, so that you are shooting images <u>as large as possible</u>. Look in the manual for the chart which shows the various combinations of image size, and degrees of jpeg compression available to you. Select the combination(s) of <u>largest number of pixels</u>, (image size) and <u>least jpeg compression</u> (highest image quality). This should set the camera to shoot large archive or print quality images, of at least 300 dpi, which you can later downsample to 72 dpi for posting to the web, for example.

- Take all pictures under controlled conditions, always in the same lighting, preferably shadow-free artificial light. If your camera is capable, consider multiple exposures with differing <u>white balance</u> settings, in order to find the setting which produces image colors and tones as close to the original as possible.

- Use a tripod, with the lens centered on the artwork, to avoid key-stoned images.

- Adjust the lens-to-subject distance so that the frame is filled by the image; this will avoid having to crop away valuable pixels at editing time.

Typically, the prospectus will call for an image of 300 dpi quality, and 6 inches on the long dimension. This can also be expressed as an image of 300 dpi, 1800 pixels on the long side (6 X 300 = 1,800).

However, when these images are viewed on a monitor, or projected, landscape images are of greater area than portrait images. In order to achieve equity in judging, most competitions are now requesting that all submitted images, both portrait and landscape, be adjusted to a standard size and dpi resolution. Thus you are also asked to convert all of your images to a square format with black bands on two sides, so that every image occupies the same area as presented to the juror.
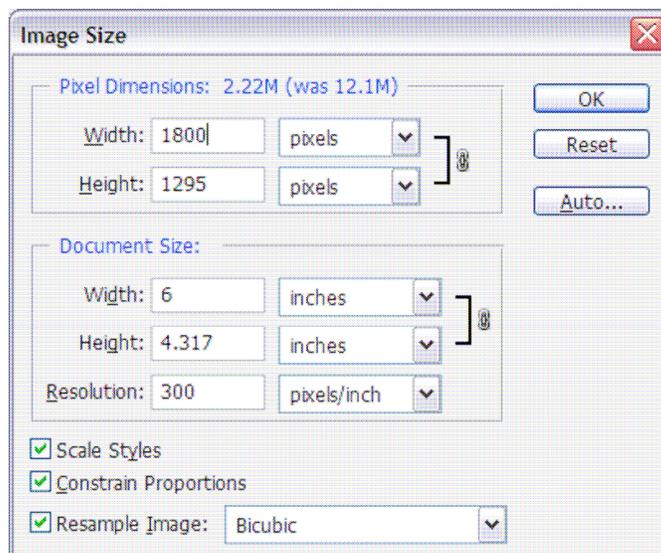
The following are generic instructions for use in many photo-editing programs. The steps may vary slightly depending on which program you are using:

1. On your computer, open an image in a photo editing program, such as Photoshop or Photoshop Elements.
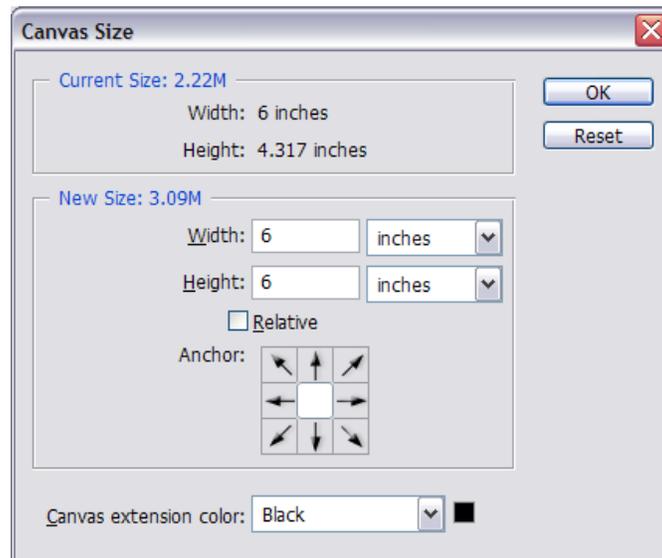

2. Open the <u>Image Size</u> or <u>Resize</u> tool box, which is usually located in one of the toolbar menus, and begin with <u>Image Size</u>:

- Make sure that all the boxes on the lower left are checked, especially "resample image".
- Set your resolution to 300 pixels per inch (dpi).
- Reduce the longer edge of the image to 1800 pixels. This will automatically reduce the length of that edge to 6 inches. The shorter side will reduce proportionally.
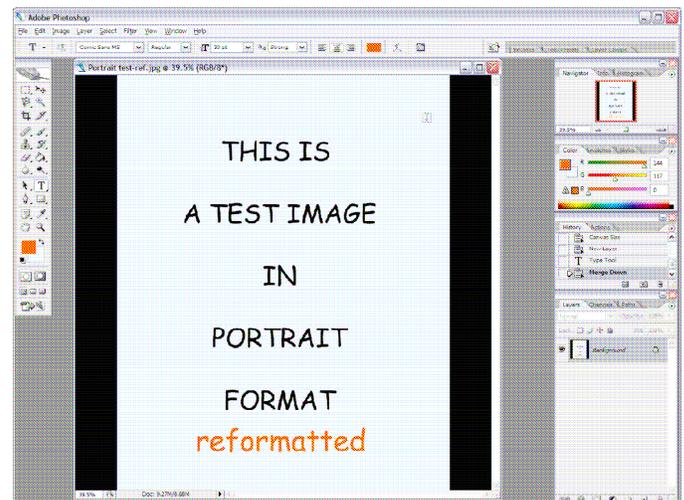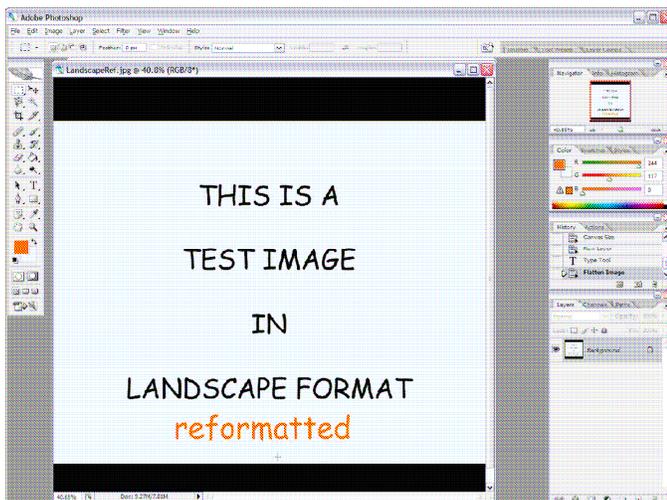

- Choose OK.

3. Go to (Image Size >) <u>Canvas Size</u>.
   • Make sure that the canvas expansion color or background color is set to <u>black</u>.
   • Make sure that the box labeled "Relative" is NOT checked.
   • Leave the image anchor in the default center box on the grid.
   • View the image in inches. Expand the canvas size on the shorter end to 6 inches(1800 pixels). The other side will stay fixed at 6 inches or 1800 pixels.

When you select OK, you will now see a square image, regardless of whether you began with portrait or landscape mode, with black bands along the longer sides.

4. Click <u>File</u> > <u>Save As</u>, and save the image file renamed as is asked for by the prospectus, typically: *yourlastname.firstnameinitial.titleofpainting.sizeofpainting.jpg*
   (for example: smith.j.aspens.12x16.jpg (no spaces or symbols))

5. If the screen asks you for quality, set it to the maximum (12). Click OK - And you're done!