

JUDGING COUNTY FAIR VIDEO EXHIBITS

General county fair photography exhibiting requirements:

- Entrance Requirements – Exhibitors can enter a class only if they are enrolled in that unit of the project. If enrolled in more than one unit, exhibitors generally can only enter the more advanced level. All exhibits must be the work of the exhibitor since the last county fair.
- Videography is usually listed as the last of the classes in Department 20 and identified as “Video Production” or “Exploring Movie Making and Video.”
- Exhibitors are sometimes required to include a script, storyboard and description of production techniques with the video.
- Videos generally are limited to three to 10 minutes, though sometimes videos as long as 15 minutes may be entered.
- The format can range from a program with “in-camera” edits to a polished program with electronic edits, titles, credits and music.
- The exhibitor or the county, not the judge, is required to provide the CD or DVD playback equipment.

Videography Judging Criteria:

- Videos should have an interesting story, with a clear beginning, middle and ending.
- Titles should stay on the screen about twice as long as it takes to read the words. Titles are words that appear on the screen to show the name of the production, the location or other information.
- Length should not exceed county fair requirements; the shorter the better!
- Videos should show a variety of scenes. A scene is a camera “shot” from start to stop. A scene should only be as long as it takes to make a point and capture the action. Most scenes should last from three to 13 seconds. A sequence is a series of related scenes that usually are made at one location. The story should flow smoothly and continuously from one scene to the next, one sequence to the next.
- Pacing should be varied and appropriate. Pacing is the “tempo” of a video or rate at which the action moves. Pacing is determined by scene length. A fast-paced sequence of

short scenes is usually more interesting to watch than a slow-paced sequence of long scenes. A fast pace communicates action, energy and excitement. A slow pace is preferable for establishing scenes.

- Videos should contain a variety of appropriately used wide shots, medium shots and close-ups. Wide shots give an overall view of the subject and setting. Wide shots work well to open a sequence because it tells you where you are. Medium shots bring the audience closer to the action. They help tell you what or who is the main subject because the subject usually fills the frame in a medium shot. Medium shots work well in the middle of a sequence. Close-ups are effective at the end of a sequence because they show you clearly what the subject is doing.
- Videos should be in focus, with proper lighting and exposure.
- The camera should generally be held steady, not shaky.
- Panning, tilting and zooming should be held to a minimum and only used to follow the action. Panning is moving the camera in an arc to follow the action. Tilting is moving the camera up or down to follow the action. Zooming in and out with a zoom lens should be done rarely, and only to show more of the action. All pans, tilts and zooms should be slow and smooth. They should not be inserted just to add interest.
- Unique camera angles and solid composition should be used to add interest to the video. To change the angle, the videographer and the camera have to move to a different position. The angle should change between each scene. Composition rules include framing, leading lines and rule of thirds.
- Sound should be natural. Transitions from scene to scene should be smooth.
- Level of sound (loudness) should be appropriate and adequate for the audience to hear clearly. Background noise, when used, should be appropriate and never distracting.
- See “Video Exhibit Judging Card” for sample scorecard.

Source: IS401, Action! Making Videos and Movies