

Sparkle Mart: Greenbelt's Juried Art and Craft Fair Photo and Video Guidelines

Thank you for applying to participate in Sparkle Mart! When preparing your application photos, please bear in mind that these images are not merely for reference. Our intention is to use select images in event promotions. The quality of your photography is a factor in artist selection for these opportunities. When you are ready, here are the links you can use to upload your files to Dropbox. No account is needed.

[Application photos](#) (required)

[Artist's video](#) (optional)

Application Photos (required): due when you submit your application

What is needed: All applicants must please upload close-up images of your wares that are representative of the product lines you wish to sell. Booth photos are also requested.

Photography tips: Please follow the guidance on page 3. Good photographs can be made with or without specialized equipment if your composition and lighting are thoughtful.

Technical requirements: Please use the “jpg” or “png” file format. If possible, provide images with a standard website resolution of 72 pixels per inch with an image height of 3”. At least some of your ware photos should please be square if possible.

Labeling your files: Please follow these examples: “DENN, Gina 1” or “KERR, John - booth”.

Artist Videos (optional): upload any time through November 1

What is needed: Applicants are invited to provide a video of up to 3 minutes in length introducing yourself and your creative process. Think of the video as a mini studio tour, or a compressed version of the conversation you might have with a customer in your booth at an in-person show. All videos will be featured on our YouTube channel, and we will also share some of the best ones on Facebook.

Technical requirements: Please record your video in landscape/horizontal mode - NOT portrait/vertical mode. Preferred file formats are “mov” and “mp4”. Please make sure you are well lit, and minimize background noise. We recommend incorporating actual video footage if possible, rather than making a slideshow from stills. Ideally, it is desirable to include footage of you creating your work.

Labeling your files: Please follow this example: “KAYAMA, Ikumi - video”

DO: Be the star of your own production! Be present. Tell us about things like your inspiration and your techniques. What is most rewarding for you about your craft? Does your work embody any special meaning, tradition, or mission? Is it a family enterprise, or the expression of a friendship or a personal passion?

DONT: Focus entirely on listing or describing the products themselves. The purpose of the video is to create a sense of personal engagement. Approach the project as an artist profile, rather than as a kind of catalogue.

Exemplary product photos from past participants. Simple yet sophisticated!



Clockwise from top left: Ruth Beer Bletzinger, Matthew Hanson, Damien Ossi, Gina Mai Denn, Tameika Reynaud and Kit Aikin.

DIY Product Photography Guidance - Please Follow

DO

- Select a single item or a small number of related items to feature in each image.
- Use a neutral background such as seamless photo paper, or a surface or prop with some texture that complements your wares.
- Light your work carefully to show color, dimension, texture and/or detail. If your light source is too harsh, try diffusing the window or lamp light with parchment paper. Often, multiple light sources shining on an object from different angles will give you the best result. You can also use white foamboard to reflect light onto areas that are too deep in shadow.
- Make sure your focus is sharp on the front of the products, even if it is deliberately softer in other areas of the frame. Use a tripod if possible to hold your phone or camera steady.
- Photograph items that are relatively flat from a position directly in front of them or directly above to prevent distortion. This would apply to quilts, paintings, etc.
- Photograph clothing on a model or dress form if possible, to show the volume and drape of the garment.
- Be creative but intentional.

DON'T

- Try to pack too much into a single photo, resulting in a crowded image that doesn't show any of the products well. (Remember - the photos will mostly be viewed as small thumbnails).
- Include anything in the frame that detracts from the elegance of your composition, such as room clutter or gridwall.
- Have "hot spots" in your photos (glare) that effectively erase parts of the image. Cellophane packaging should be removed, and special care should also be taken when photographing glass and glossy ceramics. Also, avoid harsh shadows around your products; don't place them too close to the background.
- Send images that are out of focus or grainy due to camera motion, low lighting or low resolution.
- Send images with perspective distortion. (For example, a rectangular item looking like a trapezoid, or a circle looking like an oval.)
- Photograph clothing on a hanger, if the garment has an interesting shape. Simple items without a lot of volume (like t-shirts or onesies) can be laid flat if models aren't available.
- Send images that are crooked, off-center, or awkwardly cropped in a way that looks accidental.

If you are interested in possibly purchasing a background, search for "graduated photography background" for a white-to-gray option or "seamless paper background" for a solid color option (preferably white or light gray). Highly recommended!

Many tutorials are available on YouTube, including some that introduce low-cost photo gear and others that use only common household items and office supplies.