

2026 Florida State Fair Creative Living Competitions

Fine Craft Competition Handbook

Ceramics, Glass, Mosaics, Jewelry, Woodworking,
Leatherwork & Gourd Craft

ADULT

IMPORTANT DATES

Entry Deadline: Friday, December 5, 2025

Late Entry Deadline: Friday, December 12, 2025

Item Delivery: Wednesday, January 7, 2026 - 11:00am-3:00pm
Thursday, January 8, 2026 - 11:00am-3:00pm
Friday, January 9, 2026 - 11:00am-6:00pm
Saturday, January 10, 2026 - 10:00am-4:00pm

Item Pickup: Wednesday, February 18, 2026 - 11:00am-3:00pm
Thursday, February 19, 2026 - 11:00am-3:00pm
Friday, February 20, 2026 - 11:00am-3:00pm
Saturday, February 21, 2026 - 10:00am-2:00pm

QUESTIONS?
CONTACT US!



BY PHONE AT
(813)621-7821

BY EMAIL AT
CREATIVELIVING@FLORIDASTATEFAIR.COM

ENTRY DELIVERY & PICK-UP

Enter off of Orient Road through the Service
Entrance on the west side of the fairgrounds.

A map with directions to the Florida Center
is available on the Creative Living Website



ENTRY FEES

Adult Divisions (Ages 18+): \$5 Per Entry

Late Entry: \$10 Per Entry

ENTRY FEES ARE NON-REFUNDABLE

GUIDELINES

- **Each exhibitor may submit up to four (4) items per Division for judging.** There is no limit on the number of entries within a Class. *Example: An exhibitor may enter up to 4 items in Jewelry and up to 4 items in Ceramics.*
- **Entries may not exceed 48" in any direction and must weigh less than 40 lbs.**
- Two-dimensional artwork must be installation-ready. Framed pieces should include secure screw eyes and hanging wire.
- Three-dimensional artwork must also be installation-ready. Provide a stable base if needed for proper display.
- Each adult exhibitor will receive one (1) daily admission ticket to the Fair.
- Items previously exhibited at the Florida State Fair are not eligible for competition.
- **All entries must have been completed within the past two (2) years.**
- Entries must be entirely prepared, created, or processed by the exhibitor listed on the entry form.
- Collaborative works created by two or more individuals are allowed but will be counted as one exhibitor entry (under the name of the individual who registered online).
- All entries will be displayed at the Fair, regardless of whether they receive an award. In keeping with the Florida State Fair's family-friendly environment, entries containing offensive, controversial, or otherwise inappropriate subject matter will not be accepted.

JUDGING & AWARDS

- The Fair selects judges who are experienced and knowledgeable in the categories they are assigned. Judges are expected to be fair and unbiased. They may reassign an entry to a different division or class if they feel it's a better fit.
- All entries will be judged using a scorecard to help ensure fairness and consistency. Judges' decisions are final.
- If the judge feels that an entry does not meet the standards for an award, no ribbon or prize will be given, even if it is the only entry in the class.
- Winners and final displays will be announced during the Fair.

JUDGING CRITERIA

Originality (40%)

Unique approach to subject matter

Execution (40%)

Exposure, white balance, focus, depth of field, lighting, resolution, etc

General Appearance (10%)

Visually appealing, clean

Degree of Difficulty (10%)

CERAMICS DEFINITIONS

Functional Ceramics: Refers to any ceramics piece that is not purely decorative and has some intended use. Typical examples include teapots, bowls, mugs and Vases, ect.

Non-Functional Ceramics: Created mainly for decorative use versus having a useful purpose.

Hand-Built: Any one of various techniques for creating ceramic objects that do not involve the use of a potter's wheel. These methods include coiling, slab building, and pinch pots.

Wheel Thrown: A process of producing pottery by use of a rapidly rotating disk referred to as a potter's wheel.

Slip Casting: The process of forming ceramic ware by pouring slip into usually plaster molds

Bisque ware: Refers to unglazed clay that has undergone an initial, low temperature firing in a kiln.

Surface Decoration: A ceramic that uses techniques to alter the surface of the form for purposes of decoration. For example, slips, engobes, wax resist, carving, textures, etc

CERAMICS DIVISIONS & CLASSES

Ceramics - Adult Division 100.101

Functional Ceramics

Class 1 Hand-Built

Class 2 Wheel-thrown

Class 3 Sculpture

Ceramics - Adult Division 100.101

Non-Functional Ceramics

Class 4 Hand-Built

Class 5 Wheel-thrown

Class 6 Sculpture

Ceramics - Adult Division 100.101

Commercially Made Molds (Glazed or Painted Bisque Ware)

Class 7 Hand-Built

Class 8 Wheel-thrown

Class 9 Sculpture

Ceramics - Adult Division 100.101

Handmade Molds (Glazed or Painted Bisque Ware)

Class 10 Functional

Class 11 Non-Functional

Class 12 Home Decoration

Ceramics - Adult Division 100.101

Surface Decoration

Class 13 Surface Decoration

Ceramics - Adult Division 100.101

Other Not Listed

Class 14 Other Not Listed

GLASS & MOSAICS DIVISIONS & CLASSES

Glass & Mosaics - Adult Division 100.102

Class 1 Stained Glass

Class 2 Blown Glass

Class 3 Cast Glass

Class 4 Fused Glass

Glass & Mosaics - Adult Division 100.102

Class 5 Lampworking (Non-Jewelry)

Class 6 Mosaics

Class 7 Other Not Listed

JEWELRY DEFINITIONS

Bead Strung: An individual piece or a set of jewelry that is made from various glass beads, crystals, semi-precious stones, wood, metal beads, found objects, etc. Can include lampwork beads and commercially purchased.

Set: A group or ensemble of jewelry items that go together; for example, a ring, bracelet, necklace, and earrings of matching design.

Lampworking: A type of glasswork where a torch or lamp is primarily used to melt the glass to create beads, buttons, components, etc. At least 50% of the piece of jewelry needs to contain lampwork components.

Bead weaving: Weaving on a loom or using off-loom stitches with a needle and thread.

Bead Embroidery: Hand stitching beads onto a fabric or leather backing.

Kumihimo: Weaving cords or threads using a disc.

Beading Mixed Media: Using a variety of bead-working techniques to create one piece.

Wire Wrapping: Twisting and wrapping wires into components that are connected without soldering or heating the wires.

Wire Weaving: Looping thin wire around a heavy wire frame in a pattern.

Chain Maille: Linking jump rings together using interlocking patterns.

Viking Knitting: Knitting wire using loop-in-loop techniques around a dowel.

Fabrication: Created by manipulating wires, and sheet metal using traditional fabrication techniques such as bending, forging, sawing, soldering, etc.

Casting: Created using traditional casting techniques such as centrifugal, vacuum, and cuttlebone. No commercial waxes or casting allowed. This class will include jewelry-related objects that are 50% or more cast metal made into finished jewelry.

Polymer Clay: A type of hardening modeling clay based on the polymer polyvinyl chloride (PVC). It is typically used for making arts and crafts items.

Metal Clay: A crafting medium consisting of very small particles of metal such as silver, gold, bronze, or copper mixed with an organic binder and water for use in making jewelry, beads, and small sculptures.

JEWELRY DIVISIONS & CLASSES

Jewelry - Adult Division 100.103

Beadwork

- Class 1 Bead stringing (Individual or Set)
- Class 2 Lampworking (Focal Bead or Set)
- Class 3 Bead Weaving
- Class 4 Beading on Other Material
- Class 5 Beading Mixed Media
- Class 6 Bead Embroidery
- Class 7 Kumihimo

Jewelry - Adult Division 100.103

Metalwork

- Class 8 Fabrication (Jewelry)
- Class 9 Fabrication (Jewelry with stones)
- Class 10 Fabrication (non-jewelry)
- Class 11 Casting
- Class 12 Metal Work mixed with other materials

Jewelry - Adult Division 100.103

Wire Working

- Class 13 Functional
- Class 14 Non-Functional
- Class 15 Home Decoration
- Class 16 Viking Knitting

Jewelry - Adult Division 100.103

Jewelry Made from Non-Traditional Materials

- Class 17 Polymer Clay
- Class 18 Metal Clay
- Class 19 Leather & Macramé
- Class 20 Recycled Materials
- Class 21 Fused Glass
- Class 22 Other Non-Traditional Materials

Jewelry - Adult Division 100.103

Other Not Listed

- Class 23 Other Not Listed



WOODWORKING DEFINITIONS

Fine wood furniture starts with hardwood (like cherry, maple, walnut, and oak) as opposed to soft wood (like pine and other coniferous woods).

Home Décor & Accessories includes wall-hangings, signs, or any item that decorates your living or work area.

Fretwork: An interlaced decorative design that is either carved in low relief on a solid background or cut out with a fretsaw, coping saw, jigsaw, or scroll saw.

Marquetry: The art and craft of applying pieces of veneer to a structure to form decorative patterns, designs or pictures of natural wood color. Any size (no kits).

Laser Cutting and Engraving is fabrication technique that consists of cutting or engraving wood by means of a laser. **Engraving** is done on the surface of any medium such as slate, wood, cork or acrylic or metals.

Bandsaw projects are created solely by using a bandsaw.

Intarsia: A decorative inlaid pattern on a surface, especially a mosaic worked in wood in any finish.

Wood Burning: using a heated metal tool to burn designs, words, or pictures onto a burnable surface, most commonly wood.

WOODWORKING DIVISIONS & CLASSES

Woodworking - Adult Division 100.104

Class 1 Trains
Class 2 Models
Class 3 Boxes (any side)
Class 4 Toys
Class 5 Furniture (made from softwoods)
Class 6 Home Decor
Class 7 Doll House
Class 8 Doll House Furniture & Minutures
Class 9 Holiday & Seasonal Items
Class 10 Fretwork

Woodworking - Adult Division 100.104

Class 11 Marquetry
Class 12 Intarsia
Class 13 Laser Cutting (can include wood and other materials)
Class 14 Laser Engraving (can include wood and other materials)
Class 15 Bandsaw
Class 16 Original Design
Class 17 Other Not Listed

LEATHERWORK DEFINITIONS

Saddles & Tack: Tack is a piece of equipment or accessory equipped on horses in the course of their use as domesticated animals. Saddles, stirrups, bridles, halters, reins, harnesses, martingales, and breastplates are all forms of horse tack.

Practical Cases: Any leather item used to store, cover, or carry an object, worn by man or animal.

Table Art: Any leather item used for decoration and NOT worn by man or animal.

Traditional Wearables: Leather items worn by Florida Cowboys, Native Americans, soldiers, and hunters for daily work or special occasions.

LEATHERWORK DIVISIONS & CLASSES

Leatherwork - Adult Division 100.105

Class 1 Saddles and Tack
Class 2 Practical Cases
Class 3 Table Arts
Class 4 Traditional Wearables
Class 5 Novice - Less than 2 years' experience
Class 6 Other Not Listed



GOURD CRAFT DEFINITIONS

What is Gourd Craft? The artist uses a hard-shelled gourd as a canvas to create anything that they can imagine. Gourd surfaces may be carved, painted, sanded, burned, dyed and embellished with wire, beads, natural fibers and reed.

Basket Style Gourds: The Gourd division was introduced to focus on the craft of gourd decoration. If your Gourd contains basket weaving you need to decide which division you need to compete in. Is the Gourd the more distinguished element or is it the basket weaving? **To compete in basket style, at least 50% of the entry needs to be the gourd element.** *Basket Weaving Divisions & Classes are located in the Fiber Arts Handbook.*

Painted Gourd: At least 25% of the surface needs to be decorated with painting techniques. This includes stains and inks.

Open Coiling: A coiling technique using paper rush and waxed linen

Closed Coiling: A coiling technique using paper rush covered with waxed linen.

Wood Burning: At least 25% of the surface needs to be decorated with wood burning techniques.

Carving and/or Filigree: At least 25% of the surface needs to be decorated with wood carving or filigree techniques.

Mixed Techniques or Media: A decorated gourd using multiple techniques to embellish the gourd.

GOURD CRAFT DIVISIONS & CLASSES

Gourd Craft - Adult Division 100.106

Class 1 Painted

Class 2 Basket Style Gourds

Class 3 Open Coiling

Class 4 Closed Coiling

Class 5 Wood Burning

Class 6 Carving and/or Filigree

Class 7 Mixed Techniques or Media

GENERAL RULES

DISCLAIMER

All entries are submitted at the exhibitor's own risk. The Florida State Fair is not responsible for any loss, damage, or theft of exhibits even if caused by staff, volunteers, contractors, or visitors. If you want insurance for your entry, you must arrange it through your personal insurance provider before the Fair. Reasonable care will be taken to protect exhibits. No unauthorized people are allowed in the building after closing hours.

DIVISION OR CLASS CANCELLATION

The Florida State Fair may cancel any division or class if there are not enough entries to ensure fair competition. Any affected entries will be returned.

ENTRY ERRORS

Exhibitors are responsible for making sure their entries are correct. This includes online forms and summary sheets. The Fair is not responsible for correcting mistakes, and no awards will be given for entries disqualified due to exhibitor error. If an award is later found to be ineligible, it will be withheld or recovered. You may appeal a disqualification in writing within 90 days of being notified. Include your name, address, full entry details, and your reason for requesting a review.

PREMIUM PAYMENTS

Prizes will be awarded based on the Judging Criteria Record Sheets. **Prize checks are void 6 months after the date on the check. No replacement checks will be issued after that, so please cash them promptly.**

SUBSTITUTIONS

If needed, substitutions must be made within the same department as the original entry. They must be completed by the last day of the entry delivery period. You may not transfer your entry to another person.

PREVIOUSLY ENTERED ITEMS

Entries that have been shown at past Florida State Fairs are not allowed, except for entries in Horticulture and Aquarium Beautiful.

VERIFICATION OF ENTRY

To confirm that your mailed entry form and fees were received, include a self-addressed stamped envelope with your submission. Online entries will receive a confirmation code after submitting.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR EXHIBITS

The Fair is not responsible for exhibits left behind after the scheduled pick-up time. **Anything left after that time will be treated as abandoned and discarded by April 1st of the same year.**

ENTRY REMOVAL

Once accepted, entries cannot be removed until the official release date listed in the Competition Handbook. Early removal is only allowed in cases like serious illness, emergencies, or at the Fair's discretion.

RETURNED OR BOUNCED CHECKS

A \$25 fee applies to any returned checks. This must be paid with cash, a certified check, or a money order.

MAILING PAPER ENTRY FORMS

Entry Forms must be postmarked by Friday, December 5, 2025. Failure to complete any portion of the entry form may result in disqualification. Late entries must be postmarked before December 12, 2025. If you're submitting a late entry form, you must include the extra \$5 per entry fee. **Make checks payable to: Florida State Fair Authority**

Mail Entry Form to:

Creative Living Competitions – Fine Craft
Florida State Fair
P.O. Box 11766
Tampa, FL 33680

SHIPPING ENTRIES

Shipped entries must arrive no later than January 6, 2026. **Packages MUST include Shipping form and prepaid shipping label.** Entries will be shipped back to the exhibitors after the fair in the same container. Return shipping costs are the responsibility of the entrant.

Ship Entry Form to:

Florida State Fair Authority
Fine Craft Competition
4800 US HWY 301 North
Tampa, FL 33680

RETRIEVING ENTRIES

All entries not claimed by April 1st of the same year will be recycled, disposed or donated through our program department. Entries not picked up on designated dates can be arranged for a special pick-up appointment by emailing CreativeLiving@floridastatefair.com.

EXHIBIT DESIGN & SET UP

The Florida State Fair controls how exhibits are displayed. If your entry is meant to be hung but isn't ready to hang, the Fair will display it as they see fit. No changes can be made once items are on display. Exhibitors cannot handle their entries after drop-off. Fair staff will handle final placement and assembly, using any instructions you provide. If your item needs assembly or disassembly, include clear instructions and diagrams. The Fair may use pins or other tools to secure your exhibit for display. Online entries will receive a confirmation code after submitting.

AWARD PREMIUMS

First Place - State Fair Ribbon **\$20**

Second Place - State Fair Ribbon **\$15**

Third Place - State Fair Ribbon **\$10**

Best of Show - State Fair Ribbon **\$30**

Director's Choice Award - State Fair Ribbon **\$35**

Honorable Mention Ribbons may be awarded at the discretion of the judge(s).

2026 Florida State Fair

Fine Craft Competition Entry Form

Entry Forms must be postmarked by Friday, December 5, 2025.

Late Entry Period: December 6th – 12th, 2025 (Double Entry Fees)

Failure to complete any portion of the entry form may result in disqualification.

OFFICE USE ONLY

Exhibitor # _____

Late Entry ☐ YES ☐ NO

Total Fee _____

Paid ☐ YES ☐ NO

Type ☐ Cash ☐ MO ☐ Check

Check No. _____

Please print legibly

Exhibitors Name (First, Last)			
Mailing Address			County
City	State	Zip Code	☐ Check if you are a new exhibitor
Phone ()		Email	

Entry Fee: Adult Division \$5 per entry | Late entry \$10 per entry

Exhibitors may enter up to four (4) entries per division for judging. For example: An exhibitor can enter up to 4 items in Jewelry and up to 4 items in Ceramics. Use additional entry forms if necessary.

Late Entry
☐ YES ☐ NO

#	DIVISION #	CLASS #	Entered Item Description (Woodworking-Type of wood used)	FEE
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
Total Amount Due				\$

I hereby certify that I have read the Florida State Fair General Rules for the Competitive Exhibits Program and the above item(s) before entered for exhibition strictly in accordance with those rules, by which I agree to be governed. I also agree that the Florida State Fair may use my name, likeness, or photograph (including, but not limited to photographs of my entry), in any manner relating to my participation in the Competitive Exhibits Program, free of charge and without further notice or consultation.

I understand that the 2026 Creative Living Competitions & Exhibits are held in conjunction with the 2026 Florida State Fair and agree that the Florida State Fair is not liable or responsible for any delay, change of dates, or cancellation of the 2026 Florida State Fair due to the following unforeseeable circumstances: (a) acts of God; (b) flood, fire, war, pest, or (c) other potential disaster(s) or catastrophe(s), such as epidemics, pandemics, or explosions.

Signature of exhibitor _____

Date _____

Make checks payable to: Florida State Fair Authority

Mail Entry Form to:

Creative Living Competition – Fine Crafts
Florida State Fair
P.O. Box 11766
Tampa, FL 33680