

2027 Entry Information Theme

Patterns in Everyday Life

"There are patterns in everything, in the whole of Nature, from the way the stars turn in the heavens to the whorl of a shell or the petals of a flower." — Celia Rees

Patterns are all around us, often hidden in plain sight. This assignment focuses on identifying and photographing repeating shapes, lines, textures, and designs that people encounter in their everyday lives. Subjects may include brick walls, sidewalks, fences, staircases, windows, tiled floors, fabrics, leaves, shadows, or even rows of parked bicycles or shopping carts. The goal is to create visually engaging images that emphasize repetition while encouraging the viewer to notice the beauty in ordinary objects.

To capture patterns effectively, photographers should pay close attention to composition and camera angle. Experiment with a bird's-eye view, a low-angle perspective, or shooting straight-on to highlight symmetry and repetition. Filling the entire frame with the pattern can eliminate distractions and create a stronger visual impact. Consider using the rule of thirds when incorporating a break or interruption in the pattern, such as a single object or person, to create a compelling focal point. Leading lines and geometric shapes can also guide the viewer's eye through the photograph.

Technical camera settings are equally important in producing high-quality images. Use a small aperture to achieve a greater depth of field, ensuring the entire pattern remains sharp and in focus. Accurate focus, proper exposure, and thoughtful white balance will help preserve detail, texture, and color within the pattern.

Lighting plays a significant role in emphasizing patterns and textures. Photograph during the golden hour for warm, directional light that enhances depth, or use overcast conditions for soft, even lighting that reduces harsh shadows. Try photographing the same pattern from multiple distances, using both wide-angle and telephoto focal lengths to compare how perspective changes the final image. A close-up or macro photograph can reveal intricate details, while a wider composition can show how the pattern interacts with its surrounding environment. Through creative observation and strong technical execution, this assignment demonstrates how everyday patterns can be transformed into striking photographic compositions.



Note: Entry forms for the 2027 Iowa State Fair Photography Salon will be available April 1, 2027 at www.iowastatefair.org