

2026 Florida State Fair Creative Living Competitions

Needle Arts Competition Handbook

YOUTH

QUESTIONS?
CONTACT US!



BY PHONE AT
(813)621-7821

BY EMAIL AT
CREATIVELIVING@FLORIDASTATEFAIR.COM

IMPORTANT DATES

Entry Deadline: Friday, December 5, 2025

Late Entry Deadline: Friday, December 12, 2025

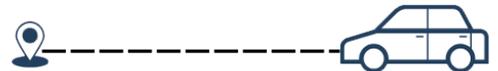
Item Delivery: Wednesday, January 7, 2026 - 11:00am-3:00pm
Thursday, January 8, 2026 - 11:00am-3:00pm
Friday, January 9, 2026 - 11:00am-6:00pm
Saturday, January 10, 2026 - 10:00am-4:00pm

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

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+): \$2 Per Entry

Late Entry: \$4 Per Entry

ENTRY FEES ARE NON-REFUNDABLE

GUIDELINES

- **Each exhibitor may submit up to three (3) items per division for judging.** Example: An exhibitor may enter up to 3 items in sewing and up to 3 items in basket weaving.
- **Entries may not exceed 48" in any direction and must weigh less than 40 lbs. This does not include Afghans, Shawls or weavings.**
- Quilts must be clean, pressed, and free from spots and stains.
- **A Quilt Information Sheet must accompany your quilt when you deliver it to the fairgrounds.**
- **All Medium & Large Quilts must have Quilt Hanging Sleeves.** See instructions online at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZjPqhTAH-9A>
- Each youth exhibitor will receive two (2) admission ticket(s) to the Fair.
- Entries previously exhibited in the Florida State Fair may not be submitted for competition.
- Exhibited work must be completed within the last two (2) years.
- Entries must have been prepared/made/ processed by the exhibitor in whose name they are entered.
- Entries completed by two or more individuals are permitted but will be counted as one exhibitor (the individual who completed the entry form).
- All entries will be displayed at the Fair whether they receive an award or not. In keeping with the Florida State Fair's family orientation, items of an offensive, controversial, or objectionable nature or subject matter will not be accepted.
- **Any item made from Llama & Alpaca Fibers. Items must be made of at least 60% Llama (Llama, Alpaca, Paco-Vicuna or Guanaco) and up to 40% of other natural fiber.**

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

Composition/Design (30%)

Execution Quality (30%)

Originality & Creativity (30%)

Presentation (10%)

TYPES OF FIBER ARTS

Types of Needlework - Class 1

Embroidery

- Hardanger
- Traditional Embroidery
- Machine Embroidery
- Japanese Bunka, original & kit
- Crewel Embroidery
- Punch Needle (Fine Thread)
- Wool Applique

Counted Thread Embroidery (Cross Stitch)

- Cross Stitch on Clothing
- Cross Stitch on Household Article
- Cross Stitch on Aida, Evenweave or Linen Cloth (framed)
- Multiple Stitch Types (framed)
- Black work

Needlepoint

- Painted Canvas Needlepoint
- Counted Canvas Needlepoint
- Needlepoint (household article, clothing, etc. anything not framed)
- Bargello
- Plastic Canvas

Miscellaneous

- Handmade lace
- Mixed Media
- Original Design Needlework (all fabrics, all counts)
- Other Not Listed

Types of Knitting & Crochet - Class 2

Knitting

- Socks
- Mittens, Hat, or Scarf
- Afghan
- Infants and Children's Wear & Sets
- Sweater, Varied Knitted Stitches
- Sweater, Varied Yarn Colors
- Shawl, Poncho, Cape or Stole
- Machine Knitted Article
- Toy, Animal, Doll or Doll Clothes
- Household Items
- Original Design
- Knitting (made from Llama & Alpaca Fibers)

Crochet

- Socks
- Mittens, Hat, or Scarf
- Doilies (Individual or Sets)
- Afghan, Single Yarn Colors
- Afghan, Varied Yarn Colors
- Infants and Children's Wear & Sets
- Sweater
- Shawl, Poncho, Cape or Stole
- Toy, Animal, Doll or Doll Clothes
- Household Items (including table linens)
- Original Design
- Crocheting (made from Llama & Alpaca Fibers)

Types of Handspun Yarn - Class 3

Handspun Yarn

- Wool, Lace – Weight: 1-oz. skein
- Wool, Worsted – Weight: 2-oz. skein
- Wool, Bulky – Weight: 2-oz. skein
- Other Animal Fiber, Lace – Weight: 1-oz. skein
- Other Animal Fiber, Worsted – Weight: 2-oz. skein
- Other Animal Fiber, Bulky – Weight: 2-oz. skein
- Non-Animal Fiber, Lace – Weight: 1-oz. skein
- Non-Animal Fiber, Worsted – Weight: 2-oz. skein
- Non-Animal Fiber, Bulky – Weight: 2-oz. skein
- Art Yarn – Weight: 2-oz. skein
- Synthetic Handspun – Weight: 2-oz. skein
- Handspun (Llama & Alpaca Fibers)

TYPES OF FIBER ARTS

Items Made With Handspun Yarn - Class 3

- Woven: Scarf
- Woven: Shawl
- Woven: Clothing/Garment
- Woven: Toy, Animal, Doll or Doll Clothes
- Woven: Household Items
- Woven: Original Design
- Knit: Socks
- Knit: Hat, Scarf, Mittens
- Knit: Sweater
- Knit: Shawl
- Knit: Infant or Child Garments
- Knit: Toy, Animal, Doll or Doll Clothes
- Knit: Household Items
- Knit: Original Design
- Crochet: Socks
- Crochet: Hat, Scarf, Mittens
- Crochet: Sweater
- Crochet: Shawl
- Crochet: Infant or Child Garments
- Crochet: Toy, Animal, Doll or Doll Clothes
- Crochet: Household Items
- Crochet: Original Design
- Woven, Knit, Crochet: Items made from Handspun Yarn (Llama & Alpaca Fibers)

Types of Weaving - Class 4

Weaving

- Woven Household Item
- Wall Hanging
- Rug, Rag
- Rug, Other
- Apparel
- Fashion Accessory
- Hand Controlled Weaving
- Weaving (made from Llama & Alpaca Fibers)*
- Original Design

Basket Weaving

- Flat Reed
- Hardwood Splint
- Florida Naturals
- Round/Wicker
- Coiling
- Rib
- Mold Woven (Nantucket, Shaker)
- Miniature (4" or less)
- Mixed Media
- Wire or Textile
- Kits & Patterns

Items Made With Handspun Yarn - Class 5

Traditional Rug Hooking

- Primitive, Floral
- Primitive, Figural/Pictorial
- Primitive, Original
- Folk Art
- Tapestry, Floral
- Tapestry, Figural/Pictorial
- Tapestry, Original
- Geometric
- Oriental
- Seasonal
- Punch Needle with an Oxford Punch Needle

Felting

- Wet Felted, Wearable Item
- Wet Felted, Non-Wearable Item
- Needle Felted, Wearable Item
- Needle Felted, Non-Wearable Item
- Felting (made from Llama & Alpaca Fibers)

Surface Design

- Dyeing using Commercial Dyes
- Dyeing using Natural Dyes
- Ice Dyeing
- Thickened Dye
- Discharge
- Fabric Painting
- Resists
- Fabric Printing & Transfers
- Distressing Techniques
- Stitching & Embellishment
- Mixed Methods

FIBER ARTS DEFINITIONS

Handspun Yarn Definitions

Handspun Yarn and garment must be the sole work of the exhibitor. All items constructed using handspun yarn must include a minimum of 6" sample of fiber or roving.

Non-Animal Fiber includes silk, flax/linen, hemp, etc.

Art Yarn defies everything we thought we knew about yarn. Wouldn't be suitable for normal patterns, even after making adjustments. Can be made from no more 50% of non-handspun materials.

Synthetic Handspun Yarns are spun from man-made or manufactured fibers.

NOTE: Handspun Yarn should be wound neatly and tied in four places. They should be the weight indicated.

NOTE: Items Made from Handspun Yarn should be made from yarn that was handspun by the maker.

Basket Weaving Definitions

Flat reed (includes Flat and Flat Oval): These baskets are predominately made from commercially processed reed from the Rattan vine. Oak handles, and wood bases can be used, but the majority of the basket is flat or flat oval reed.

Traditional Splint: Baskets made from white oak, black ash, hickory, maple, cedar, and chestnut. The weaving materials are the raw wood that has been manually processed to obtain or make the weavers, staves, and handles.

Florida Naturals: Baskets made from barks, vines (grape, kudzu, honeysuckle, etc.), roots, inflorescence, philodendron, pine needles, grasses, roots, seed pods, etc. - anything grown and gathered in Florida.

Wicker: Baskets made from round reed or natural willow.

Coiling: Baskets formed in a continuous spiral made of pine needles, grasses, and cords.

Ribbed: Baskets are all woven (flat reed, round reed, naturals) around one round rim or two hoops and ribs made of reed spokes.

Mold Woven: Nantucket and Shaker baskets that are woven over a mold to create a uniform shape and size. Many have wood bottoms and staves are usually flat or flat oval reed, cane, ash, or cedar.

Miniature: Any style of basket that is 4" or less

Mixed Media: Any combination of reed, splint, wire, waxed linen, fabric, paper, vines, beads, etc. – it is an "anything goes" category.

Wire or Textile: Any basket made from woven wire, waxed linen, waxed cotton, fabric, paper, rope, sisal, raffia, seagrass, leather, etc.

Kits and Patterns: These baskets are constructed from any materials in a purchased project kit or woven from any materials based on another person's pattern or design. They would not be considered "original" work as the weaver is following instructions and using supplies or materials provided or selected by the basket pattern's designer.

Surface Design Definitions

Surface Design encompasses the coloring, patterning, and structuring of fiber and fabric. This involves creative exploration of processes such as dyeing, painting, printing, stitching, embellishing, quilting, weaving, knitting, felting, and paper-making.

Commercial Dyes consist of Fiber Reactive Dyes, Acid Dyes and Disperse Dyes

Natural Dyes consists of Cellulose and Protein Fibers only

Thickened Dye is simply a dye solution which has been thickened into a paste with the help of something like sodium alginate. Thickened dye is absorbed into the fibers, and when the excess dye and print paste is washed away, the fabric is just as soft as before.

Discharge is the removal of dye from fabric.

Resists block the application of dye, paint, or discharge chemicals.

Shibori is a Japanese manual resist dyeing technique, which produces patterns on fabric.

Mixed Methods: We realize that Surface Design may combine a variety of techniques but when choosing a division and class, choose one that best describes the majority of the techniques used to create your piece.

FIBER ARTS DIVISIONS & CLASSES

Fiber Arts - Youth (Age 6-10) Division 110.301

Fiber Arts - Youth (Age 11-13) Division 110.401

Fiber Arts - Youth (Age 14-18) Division 110.501

Class 1 Needlework (Includes: Embroidery (any kind), Counted Thread Embroidery (cross stitch) (any kind) and Needlepoint (any kind))

Class 2 Knitting & Crochet (any kind, except handspun) Knitting & Crochet (made from Llama & Alpaca Fibers)*

Class 3 Handspun Yarn (any kind) Includes: Skeins Items made from handspun yarn

Class 4 Weaving Arts Includes: Weaving (any kind), Weaving (made from Llama & Alpaca Fibers)* and Basket Weaving.

Class 5 Other Fiber Arts Includes: Traditional Rug Hooking with Wool, Felting (any kind), Felting (made from Llama & Alpaca Fibers)* Surface Design.

*** Any item made from Llama & Alpaca Fibers. Items must be made of at least 60% Llama (Llama, Alpaca, PacoVicuna, or Guanaco) and up to 40% of other natural fiber.**

TYPES OF SEWING

Types of Sewing - Class 1

Apparel (adult & children)

- Dress (daytime)
- Blouse & Skirt
- Pants (Women or Men)
- Sportswear (Women or Men)
- Tailored Suit or Jacket (Women or Men)
- Sleeping Wear or Robe (Women or Men)
- Coat, Cape or Jacket (Women or Men)
- Baby's Apparel (up to 36 months)
- Child's Apparel (3-12 years)
- Child's Sleeping Garment or Robe
- Wedding Gown
- Bridal Wear (bridesmaids, flower girl, mother of bride or groom dress)
- Wedding Accessories, must be sewn (no flowers)
- Formal & Party Wear (Women, Men or Children)
- Evening Gowns or Prom Dress

Types of Sewing - Class 2

Home Décor (pillow, etc.)

- Pillow
- Table Linen

Types of Sewing - Class 3

Apparel Accessory (hat, scarf, etc.)

- Hat, Scarf, Tie & Bow tie
- Purse or Bag
- Apron
- Doll Clothes

Types of Sewing - Class 4

Costumes (any kind)

- Science Fiction Character
- Anime or Manga Character
- Fantasy Character
- Comic Book Character
- Movie Character
- Historical or Renaissance Character
- Steampunk
- Holiday or Seasonal Costume

Types of Sewing - Class 5

Recycled Fashions (any kind)

- Dress – Daytime (Women)
- Dress – Daytime (Children)
- Formal & Party Wear (Women)
- Formal & Party Wear (Men)
- Formal & Party Wear (Children)
- Gowns – Wedding or Evening (Women)
- Gowns – Wedding or Evening (Children)
- Coat, Cape or Jacket (Women or Men)
- Hats & Headpieces
- Shoes

SEWING DIVISIONS & CLASSES

Sewing - Youth (Age 6-10) Division 110.302

Sewing - Youth (Age 11-13) Division 110.402

Sewing - Youth (Age 14-18) Division 110.502

1 Apparel (any kind)

2 Home Décor (pillow, etc.)

3 Apparel Accessory (Hat, scarf, etc.)

4 Costumes (any kind)

5 Recycled Fashions (any kind)

QUILTING DEFINITIONS

Size of Quilts:

Small: a quilt less than 40" on any one side

Medium: a quilt that is 40"– 80" on any one side

Large: a quilt greater than 80" on any one side

Single Person is when your quilt is pieced, sewn, and quilted by one person.

Appliqued: a quilt that at least 50% of the quilt is appliqued

Art Quilt is a type of quilt that uses embellishments of any kind to enhance the quilt; this could include felting, painting, stenciling, thread art, etc.; at least 50% of the quilt is quilted

Embroidered: uses hand or machine embroidery stitches to decorate pieces; at least 50% of the quilt is embroidered.

Quilted Household Items could include table runners, Christmas tree skirts placemats, pillows, etc.

Note: Quilts must have Quilt Hanging Sleeves.

QUILTING DIVISIONS & CLASSES

Quilting - Youth (Age 6-10) Division 110.303

Quilting - Youth (Age 11-13) Division 110.403

Quilting - Youth (Age 14-18) Division 110.503

1 Hand Quilted (any kind)

2 Hand Quilted Item (any kind)

3 Machine Quilted (any kind)

4 Machine Quilted Item (any kind)

YOUTH QUILT INFORMATION FORM

Exhibitors Name (First, Last)

Name of Longarmer (First, Last)

Name of Book or Pattern

Date Quilt was made

Additional Information:

In the space below please provide any additional information that the judge(s) may find helpful to know when judging your quilt.

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 – Youth Fiber Arts
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
Youth Fiber Arts 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 **\$12**

Second Place - State Fair Ribbon **\$7**

Third Place - State Fair Ribbon **\$4**

Best of Show - State Fair Ribbon **\$20**

Fiber Arts Best of Show Awards will be chosen from the Best of Class winners in each of the Fiber Arts' Age Group Divisions (Needlework, Knitting & Crochet, Handspun Yarn, Weaving Arts & Other Fiber Arts).

Sewing & Quilting Best of Show Awards will be chosen from the First-Place winners in each Sewing & Quilting Age Group Divisions (Sewing & Quilting).

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

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

