

Photo Guidelines

What to photograph

The National Register wants representative photos of any given property. For a single property, this can be achieved with 10-12 photos. For properties with several resources or for historic districts, the number will vary.

- Individual properties: views should include all four sides of the exterior and any exterior details and overviews of the interior and any interior details
- Multiple properties/historic districts: general views, streetscapes, individual exterior, architectural details, structures, objects, and sites should be documented. It is not necessary to photograph each building separately or to have an image of every single resource. The applicant should strive for a blend of contributing and non-contributing properties from a variety of time periods, sizes, and architectural styles

It is important that alterations, changes, or additions be included in the photographs. Do not intentionally exclude those portions of historic properties. The National Register acknowledges degrees of alteration, but they must be documented in both the text and accompanying photography. Otherwise an inaccurate image of the resource is conveyed.

Labeling photographs

All photographs, regardless of format, must be identified.

- For black and white prints, the following information should be either on the back of each photo or on a Continuation Sheet. Label the photos with pencil or archival photo-labeling pen (such as Sharpie Ultra Fine Point permanent marker). Do not use ink, ballpoint or regular felt tip pen. Do not affix photos to archival paper or any other material using staples, paper clips, glue, or other means. Photographs with adhesive labels or corrective liquid (White-out) will not be accepted.
- For digital images, the information should be in the photo log saved on the CD with the photographs

Each photo, regardless of format, must have the following information:

1. Name of property (for districts, list the name of the individual building shown, followed by the name of the district)
2. County and state where property is located
3. Name of photographer
4. Date of photograph
5. Location of photograph negative/CD
6. Description of view, indicating direction camera is facing
7. Photograph number

Updated National Register Photography Policy

As of March 2005, the National Register has expanded their photo policy. Previously the Register required photographs to be 35mm black and white prints that would last at least 100 years.

Archivally processed 35mm black and white photographs will still be accepted. However, such photos are becoming increasingly difficult and expensive to obtain. In an effort to make National Register photography more accessible, the new policy allows for black and white prints

produced from digital images. No photos processed with chromogenic processing (C-41) or printed on chromogenic papers currently meet the established standard and are, therefore, not acceptable. We will accept traditional 35mm black and white photographs or a CD of digital images.

Digital Photography Requirements

The option of using digital photography is a new one. Digital photographs must be saved as uncompressed .TIF (Tagged Image File format) in keeping with the guidance on digital photographic records issued by the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration.

Please note: : .TIF is not an option on all digital cameras so please check your owner's manual. If .TIF is not available, images may be taken in another format but they must be capable of conversion to the following size and resolution: size of each .TIF image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. It is recommended that digital images be saved in 8-bit (or larger) color format, which provides maximum detail even when printed in black and white.

Creating a digital photo log

The individual image files must be labeled and there must be a photo log for all photos. The photo numbers of the saved digital images must correspond to the photo log. The digital images should also reference the state and county in which the property is located. For example, the image files for Hulihee Palace in Kailua-Kona, Hawaii, would be saved as "HI_KailuaKona_Hulihee1.tif," "HI_KailuaKona_Hulihee2.tif," and so on. The log itself must contain the same seven identification items that the National Register has always required. The CD should be labeled with the name of the property, the county, and state where the property is located.

35mm Black and White Print Requirements

Photographs must be archival black and white images from camera-exposed photographic film printed on silver-emulsion fiber-based papers or silver emulsion resin-coated (RC) papers using archival black and white processing. **Images printed on color paper or utilizing color processing will not be accepted.**