



Smithsonian Institution

# Archives of American Gardens Digital Photography Policy

Revised June 2023



ded for the Archives of American Gardens must meet the **minimum** below to be considered for permanent retention.

**QUESTIONS?** Please contact your **GHD zone representative** if you have any questions about whether or not your camera meets AAG's minimum standards.

**Why are these standards important?** AAG invests a substantial amount of its resources into preserving the collections it acquires. These minimum standards help ensure that digital files are viable for long-term preservation and can be used for standard museum purposes including publications and exhibitions.

## Digital Camera Sensor Information

### PREFERRED:

- Digital single-lens reflex (DSLR) camera with minimum 22mm or higher sensor size along one side. *Example: Canon EOS Rebel T3i*
- Micro Four Thirds and Mirrorless cameras
- Large sensor compact cameras
- Drone cameras with a large sensor

### ACCEPTABLE:

- iPhone, iPads (Actual Size file sizes and JPEG format only)

## Digital Camera Image (Capture) Settings

### File Formats/Image Quality



- **Amateur photographers:** JPEGs at the *highest* image quality setting (usually JPEG Fine) or TIFF (if your camera will shoot in TIFF).
- **Professional photographers:** Images shot in RAW must be processed as 16-bit TIFFs before delivery to AAG. Do not shoot in RAW, if you are not a trained photographer.

### Image Size

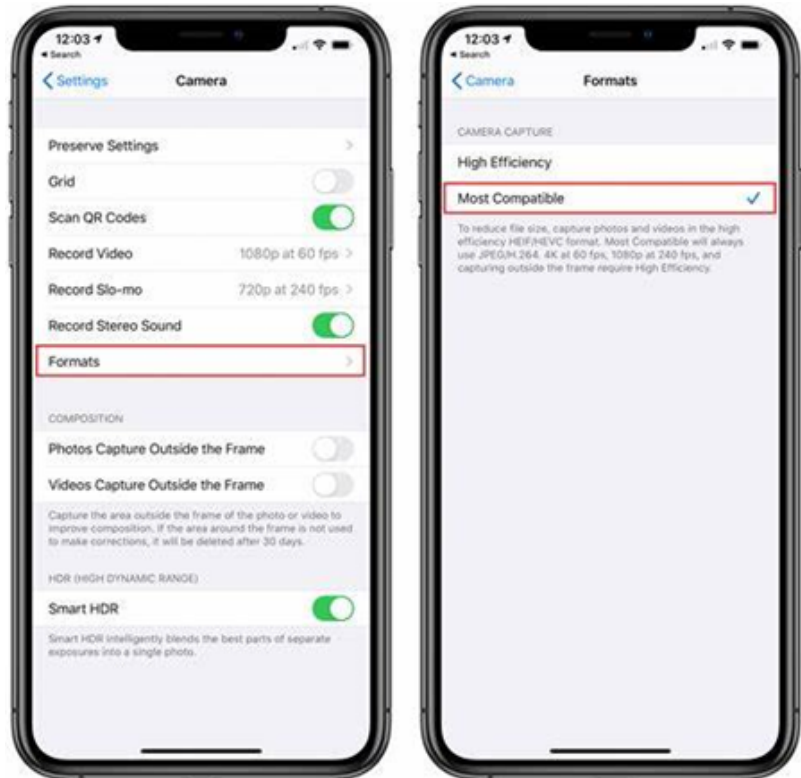
- Choose a **Large or Medium** Image Size setting.
- Image at least 4,000 pixels (or higher) on the longest side is preferred.



## iPhone Capture Settings

### File Formats/Image Quality

- Photos taken with an iPhone must be captured at and sent at the **largest size (Actual Size)**.
- The default setting on iPhones takes images/videos using an HEIC file extension.
- Before taking images, change the settings on your phone so that the *Most Compatible* format is selected (JPEG). **Settings > Camera > Format > select 'Most Compatible'**
- Image at least 4,000 pixels (or higher) on the longest side is preferred.



## File Size Requirements

- Preferred file size is at least 4MB and up to 10MB.
- Minimum file size accepted by AAG is 2MB. Any file smaller than 2MB will be declined.
- Note: 1MB (megabyte) = 1,000 KB (kilobytes).
- The photos submitted should be the largest file size. The largest file size is sometimes described as Largest size, Original size, Actual size, Full resolution or High resolution.

## Digital Image Processing Dos and Don'ts

### Image manipulation

- Images should document the garden as it is (do not erase things like garden hoses,

compost bins, etc.). AAG holdings are meant to document garden history, not re-invent it!

**Images shot as JPEG's**

- Should be saved as they are in highest quality (large) file size.
- Do NOT rename .jpeg file extensions to .tiff. Doing so makes the files unreadable.
- Should not be manipulated in Photoshop.

**Images shot in RAW**

- Must be processed as 16-bit TIFFs (preferred) or high resolution JPEGs before being submitted to AAG.

**Images shot in HEIC**

- HEIC files must be converted to JPEGS

**File Size**

- Preferred file size is 2-5MB or larger
- Minimum file size accepted by AAG is 2MB. Any file smaller than 2MB will be declined.

**Digital Image Delivery**

<b>Renaming Digital Image Files</b>	<p>After selecting images for submission, rename them in the following manner:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">01_GardenName_YearMonthDay_PhotographerLastName 02_GardenName_YearMonthDay_PhotographerLastName</p> <p>{indicate date image was photographed, not when it was processed}</p>
<b>Storage of Digital Image Files</b>	<p><b>File Transfer Protocol/FTP</b> (e.g. Google Drive, Drop Box, iCloud, etc.) -See AAG Digital File Transfer Policy for additional guidance</p> <hr/> <p><b>Flash drive</b> - Label flash drive or flash drive with name of garden.</p>
<b>Working with Digital Files</b>	<p>- Some email programs compress images automatically to make it easier to send large files. Avoid emailing submission images back and forth.</p> <p>- Be sure that the final submission includes the highest resolution files available.</p>
<b>Back-up Mailed Submissions</b>	<p>Save a copy of the digital images in case the submission (on a flash drive) is damaged or lost in the mail.</p>
<b>Required Documentation</b>	<p><b>AAG Photographer's Release</b> - Indicate the camera's make and model on the AAG Photographer's Release.</p> <hr/> <p><b>Image Caption List</b> - Be sure to indicate the photographer of each image on the Image Caption List. - Double check the list <i>especially</i> if there is more than one photographer, shooting date, and/or camera. - Be sure to number and caption any historic images.</p>

### Scanner Setting Options for Scanning Original Photographic Prints

If a garden owner has original photographs but does not wish to donate them, the images may be digitized on a flatbed scanner and saved as a TIF or JPG file. The physical size of the original photograph will affect the resulting digital image file size, so it is recommended that you use a higher resolution setting when scanning small photographs.

	<b>Recommended</b>	<b>Accepted/Minimum</b>
<b>Scanner resolution setting</b>	600 ppi (8X10 in photographic prints)	300 ppi (at original size)
<b>File format</b>	Uncompressed TIFF	JPEG/JPEG Fine
<b>File size</b>	>4MB	2MB

### **AAG DOES NOT ACCEPT:**

- Digital images less than 2MB (2,000 KB).
- Camera Raw files (NEF, CRW, SRF, HEIC, HEIF).
- Images copied from other repositories or published sources.
- Video

### **AAG STILL ACCEPTS:**

- Submissions with a combination of digital images, original 35mm slides and/or photographic prints.