



2026 New Year Photo Card Challenge

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KEY DATES

- Open Date: **May 26, 2026**
 - Submission Deadline: **Jun 16, 2026 at 10 am PT**
 - Critique Period: **Jun 16, 2026 - Jun 17, 2026 at 10 am PT**
 - Expected Voting Period: **Jun 17, 2026 - Jul 1, 2026**
- All phases end at **10 a.m. PT**
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OVERVIEW

Cheers! It's time for Minted's final Holiday Challenge of the year: the New Year Photo Card Challenge. Many customers prefer to share a Happy New Year message along with their annual photo, rather than a holiday or Christmas-specific one. We are looking to you, our talented community of artists, to create fresh, unique New Year photo card designs. We are seeking designs in a broad range of styles and greetings, with messages that range from sentimental to funny to forward-looking.

Important Notes:

- **Submission Limit:** 15 total submissions (between foil-pressed and non-foil submissions). K-level Holiday artists in our [CMYK Program](#) are exempt from this submission limit
- We are accepting both non-foil and foil-pressed designs in this Challenge, however, the majority of selections will be non-foil
- New! For this year's Holiday Photo Card Challenges, we are accepting Photo Mount and Tall format submissions instead of running a separate Challenge for these formats. Please see the Submission Guidelines section below for more details!

PRIZES

TOP-RATED PRIZES

The Top-Rated pieces, as voted by consumers and artists, will receive the following prizes **plus an ongoing commission of 6% of net sales of the products sold**:

FIRST PRIZE: **\$4,000**

SECOND PRIZE: **\$1,500**

THIRD PRIZE: **\$750**

FOURTH - TENTH PRIZES: **\$300**

EDITORS' PICKS AWARDS

Minted will select additional designs for sale as Editors' Picks, with artists of selected designs receiving **\$170, plus ongoing commission of 6% of net sales of the products sold**. See our "File Submission and Payment Information for Winning Designs" section below for more information.

SPECIAL PRIZES

Among the Top-Rated pieces and Editors' Picks, Minted's Editorial Council will also award Special Prizes* to individual pieces.

1. **Out of the Box Award:** for the most design-forward, risk-taking New Year card that you would only find at Minted. **Patrick Priore, VP of Merchandising, will personally select TWO winners of this award: \$1,000 for each winner**
2. **The More the Merrier Award:** For the design that best showcases multiple photos in an original way: **\$1,000**
3. **Contemporary Typography Award:** For the best design using serif, sans serif, or a mix of non-script and script modern fonts: **\$500**
4. **Original Drawing and Illustration Award:** For the design that incorporates the best original drawing, illustration, or painting that has been made specifically for this Challenge and not used before: **\$500**
5. **Year in Review Award:** For the best design that allows customers to reflect and share their favorite memories and highlights from the past year: **\$500**
6. **Copywriter Award:** Whether it be sentimental, unique, or funny, some customers look for a card with a message that celebrates and reflects on the prior year, and looks ahead to the next one. This is for the best design that features funny, playful, clever, unique or sentimental copy rather than a typical New Year greeting. We are looking for clever copy across all design styles: **\$400**
7. **Pop of Color Award:** For the best design that embraces color and unique color combinations in a vibrant, fresh, modern, and festive way: **\$350**
8. **Tall Multi Photo Award:** For the best Tall format card that features multiple photos: **\$350**

- 9. Vintage Photography Award:** For the best design inspired by vintage photography. Think photo strips, polaroids, film, etc!: **\$350**
- 10. Pattern Award:** For the best design featuring a pattern, including, but not limited to, geometric, plaid, gingham, icons, abstract, stripe, polka dot, etc. We are looking for patterns across a range of styles: **\$300**
- 11. “2027” Award:** For the best design that showcases the year “2027” in a creative way: **\$300**
- 12. Sparkle and Shine Award:** For the best foil card design that feels intentional and impactful—foil that truly elevates the design: **\$300**
- 13. Noteworthy Award:** For the design that features the most unique hand lettering that resembles a handwritten note: **\$250**
- 14. Square Shape Award:** For the best square shaped card design: **\$250**
- 15. Visions of Die-Cuts Award:** For the best design that highlights one of Minted’s die-cut shapes: **\$250**
- 16. New Beginnings Award:** For the best design celebrating what’s new and exciting in someone’s life - whether they’re newly married, have a new baby, a new home, or a new pet: **\$250**
- 17. First-Time Winner Award:** For the best design from a designer winning for the first time: **\$250**
- 18. Font Award:** For the best design featuring an on-trend and fresh font: **\$250**

*Special Prizes will be awarded at Minted’s sole discretion. If for any reason, Minted cannot fulfill the described non-monetary Special Prize commitment, we will award you with a prize of equal or greater value. If you live outside of the United States, we will award you with the monetary equivalent of the non-monetary prize.

PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES

When you submit to a Minted Challenge, we ask that you adhere to our policies and community standards. Below, we've listed the key requirements you should meet.

- All submissions to Minted Challenges **must be your own original work**. We take design originality and integrity very seriously at Minted. Any work you submit should be 100% of your own creation. Copying or tracing a design or artwork in full or in part is not permitted and could result in a suspension or permanent ban from Minted activity. [Please see these FAQs](#) for more information on design integrity and how to ensure your work is truly original
 - **AI-Generated Art:** Per our Terms & Conditions, Generative AI tools are only allowed for editing and file production workflows. Artists are responsible for ensuring they understand [Minted's AI policy](#) and that their work meets these requirements. See our [full AI Policy and FAQs](#) as well as our Terms & Conditions for more information.
 - Work cannot currently be for sale elsewhere and, once submitted, **cannot be used anywhere else for 90 days after the submission deadline**
 - Don't submit repurposes of your designs already for sale on Minted to this Challenge (Not sure if your design is a repurpose? [Find out here](#))
 - You may submit multiple designs; however, do not submit multiple designs with different colorways or minor tweaks. [Learn about iterations here](#)
 - During the [Critique Period](#), you may edit and refine your submission; however, don't upload completely new designs to replace **'placeholder'** submissions or your entry will be disqualified
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SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

When creating your submission, we ask that you meet a few creative requirements. These requirements are meant to ensure our products can be produced at the level of quality Minted is known for and that customers can easily tailor designs to their needs. Below, we cover the format your design should be in and how you may use photos, stock art, elements, and fonts.

FORMAT

- We're looking for non-foil pressed and foil-pressed designs with photos
- Designs can be in landscape, portrait, or square orientation
- Your design should suit A7 (5" x 7") or square (5.25" x 5.25") card dimensions, and allow for .1" bleed
- **Please only submit a design for the front of your card in one colorway.** If your design wins, please see the section "File Submission and Payment Information For Winning Designs" below for file submission information

PHOTO MOUNT FORMAT DETAILS

Printing Type & Card Sizes

- Available card sizes include A7 Portrait, A7 Landscape, and S6 Square (please note that S6 Square is only available for Non-Foil Photo Mount)
- We will accept Photo Mount submissions in non-foil and foil in this Challenge

Photo Sizes

- Given that photos are printed separately from the card for this product, we are limited to the following photo sizes:
 - 3 x 3 (square)
 - 4 x 4 (square)
 - 4" x 3" (landscape) and 3" x 4" (portrait)
 - 6" x 3.5" (landscape) and 3.5" x 6" (portrait)
 - 5" x 3" (landscape) and 3" x 5" (portrait)

Additional Specifications

- In order to ensure symmetrical photo mounting, designs have to include a border around the photo space. You are able to utilize any type of border (i.e. straight border, double border, dotted border, wavy border, scallop border, botanical border, bow border, etc.) as long as the photo space is framed.
- Die-cut shapes are not available for Photo Mount cards.

TALL CARD FORMAT DETAILS

- We will accept tall format card submissions in non-foil and foil for this Challenge
- The tall format card size is 4" x 8.25" (portrait) and 8.25" x 4" (landscape)
- We are looking for single photo and multi-photo designs for this format
- Rounded Corners is the only die-cut shape available for this format

FOIL-PRESSED ELEMENTS

- Only non-customizable text and elements can be foil-pressed
- Our holiday foil colors include:
 - **Foil Colors:** Gold, Glittery Gold, Red, Bronze, Rose Gold, Silver, Ice Blue, Green
 - **Gloss:** Iridescent Pearl
 - [See examples of each foil color here](#)
- ***Please review [these requirements](#) for using Minted Foil colors**
- Optimize your design submission for the unique process of foiling, using [Minted's insider tips](#)

PHOTO NOTES

- Download the Photokit for this Challenge [HERE](#)
- Do not use photos from prior years' kits or from other Challenges
- **Note:** We provide a variety of photos in our photo kits for you to use that represent Minted's diverse customer base. Our customers find it valuable to see a wide range of people represented in our designs, so we make sure to include a diverse assortment of photos on the first few pages of our final assortments. We strongly encourage you to use a variety of photos in your Minted submissions

CUSTOMIZABLE ELEMENTS

- Make sure your design can accommodate the average length of a full name — about 20 characters
- Don't apply textures, patterns, glyphs, warped effects, or flourishes on any text a customer should be able to customize on their own

- Keep each word one color (i.e. do not use alternating colors for letters within one word) if it will be customizable by a customer on their own
- Be clever with your design elements! Customers love that we offer unusual, customizable details on our cards, especially moveable text/design elements that allow a design to work with an array of photos

FONTS

- We encourage artists to use new and interesting fonts in their submissions! We look to artists to find trends and use the font that feels right for their design. There are some considerations to keep in mind when choosing fonts:
- Minted licenses all the fonts that we use for print and online. We are not able to distribute fonts, so each artist must purchase their own. Our [Minted Font List](#) tells you which typefaces we currently have this licensing for.
- There are some fonts we already know we are not able to license. **Please do not submit designs that use fonts that are on our [Cannot License list](#).** If your design does use one of these fonts and is selected, you are required to replace it with a Minted font before submitting your final files.
- Please note that free font sites usually do not offer the kind of licensing Minted needs, unless they specifically call out a SIL or open source license.

STOCK ART

- We encourage you to use your own original artwork in your submissions. However, you may [use stock art in a transformative way that reimagines the elements](#). They must be royalty-free with a usable license, without payment of any royalty by Minted or any other limitations

FILE SUBMISSION AND PAYMENT INFORMATION FOR WINNING DESIGNS

If your design is selected as a winner in this Challenge, you'll be asked to provide certain files in order to receive prize payment. So you know what to expect, we've listed the technical requirements of final files for winning designs and detailed our flexible prize payment structure below. When you submit to a Minted Challenge, we ask that you adhere to our policies and community standards.

Winners will receive a file request to submit via Dropbox or our internal file upload system. Final artwork must meet the following criteria.

- Must be in Adobe Illustrator® format
- Be in CMYK mode (no RGB colors)
- [Have all typesetting editable in Illustrator®](#)

We use a [flexible Editors' Pick Prize payment policy](#). We classify each file as "required" or "optional" and you can choose your overall time commitment through these options.

Note: Top-Rated winners will receive the listed Top-Rated cash prize amount for submitting the "Required" files listed below.

Alternate greetings (unique copy for Holiday, Christmas, Religious Christmas, New Year) are encouraged. These allow customers to ensure that the design they love aligns with the holiday message they would like to send!

Final artwork submitted must match the low-res submission image as voted on by the public, except for changes specifically requested by Minted during the file request process. **Files that deviate from the winning submission will not be accepted; if not corrected, they will be removed from the winners list and will not be launched.** Exceptions may be made, in Minted's sole discretion, for good faith attempts to recreate the winning submission as exactly as possible, e.g. in case of file corruption.

Please understand that our crowdsourcing process works for a reason: it collects accurate feedback from consumers regarding exactly what they want to buy. By changing your design after it has been positively rated by customers, you (and we) risk undoing the magic that makes the design a bestseller.

Required vs. Optional File Policy

- **Required** – You must submit files for all required items in order to receive payment. All items will launch as part of your suite
- **Optional** – You do not receive any additional payment for submitting files for this item. If you choose not to submit files, your suite will launch without that item

Note: As part of our efforts to increase your return-on-time at Minted, we raised the payment for required files and included the previous on-time bonus into the amount. However, please note that on-time files are extremely critical to our holiday launch. We ask you to please make every effort to submit files by our stated due date. If your holiday files are late, we cannot guarantee that the design will launch with the main assortment or be on site for a full calendar year before being considered for retirement.

We require 3 colorways for Holiday Photo Cards:

Required Files	(3 colorways) Front (3 colorways) Single Pattern (Backer + Liner) ¹ (3 colorways) Matching Envelope 9 Total Required Items
Optional Files <i>\$0 payment</i>	(up to 3) Additional colorways (3 colorways) Alternate Orientation ² (3 colorways) Second Pattern (Backer or Liner only) ¹
Total Editors' Pick³ Prize	\$170 For 9 Files (Required + Optional)

¹ To save artists time, we combined backer and liner files into a single pattern file requirement.

² Alternate orientations are only optional for non-foil-pressed, single photo designs with either a portrait or landscape photo space.

³ Top-Rated winners will receive the listed Top-Rated cash prize amount for submitting the "Required" files listed above.

CREATING AND SUBMITTING YOUR DESIGN

1. CREATE HIGH-RES ARTWORK

Create your design in Adobe Illustrator using the templates and textures in the Challenge Kit.

[Learn more about how to create your submission.](#) Only submit a design for the front of your card in one colorway

Pro Tip: Focus on quality over quantity. One great way to curate your submissions is to [ask for feedback from your peers](#)

2. CREATE A LOW-RES SUBMISSION

Save a smaller version of your design for viewing in the Challenge gallery — under 600kb and sized at exactly 1100 pixels on the longest side (Not sure how? [See instructions here](#))

Note: If submitting a JPEG, it must be in RGB color mode

3. READ AND ACCEPT TERM AND CONDITIONS

While submitting, you will be asked to thoroughly read and agree to the Minted Terms and Conditions for Design Submissions, which are included at the end of this document

Note: Terms and Conditions are updated each Challenge

4. SUBMIT YOUR DESIGNS

Submit your design at www.minted.com/contest. You will be asked to log in or create a Minted artist account, fill in the form, and upload your submission. Be sure to choose a unique title for your artwork, using letters and numbers only. On the submission page, check each box that applies to your design. [Learn more about what these checkboxes mean](#)

Troubleshooting Tip! When submitting your creative URL, be sure to only use letters (no numbers or special characters) and to only enter the end of your desired address (e.g. enter “mintedartist” for a final URL of “www.minted.com/creative/mintedartist”)

5. CONNECT WITH THE COMMUNITY

Minted fosters a supportive community of artists to help you learn, grow professionally, and build relationships with like-minded creatives. We recommend you reach out to artists through the

[Minted Artist Community Slack](#) and attend Minted artist meetups

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Once submitted, you can [edit](#) or [remove](#) your design before the submission deadline. At that point, the [Critique Period](#) begins, during which you can give and receive feedback with fellow Minted artists and continue to edit your work. The Critique Period is immediately followed by the [Voting Period](#)
- We analyze voting results to determine the Top-Rated winners. Additionally, Minted's Editorial Council reviews all submissions and voting data and considers further factors such as diversity of style, risk-taking, and gaps in the current assortment to help select [Editors' Picks](#). We share anticipated winner announcement timelines on our [Weekly Updates page](#). Winners are announced via email and on our [winners page](#)

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Introduction and Limitations on Submissions

You affirm that you are over 18 years of age, are fully able and competent to enter into the terms, conditions, obligations, affirmations, representations, and warranties set forth in these Terms and Conditions, and to abide by and comply with these Terms and Conditions.

By submitting your Work (as defined in “Exclusive License for Winning Designs”) to Minted and checking the box provided in the relevant challenge brief, you agree to the following terms and conditions:

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You may not submit any materials, including, without limitation, photographs or other images, text, graphics, videos, visuals, sounds, data, files, links, or other materials including the Work (“Materials”) that could infringe any rights of privacy or publicity, copyrights, or other intellectual property rights, unless you have the written permission of the owner of these rights and the persons (or their parents or legal guardians, where applicable) who are shown or who have rights in or to the Materials. Furthermore, you may not submit any Materials that may give rise to any civil or criminal liability under applicable law or expose Minted or its legal affiliates or partners to the threat of the same.

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Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (Generative AI) Tools. Minted allows limited use of Generative AI tools in producing your Work. The only Generative AI tool you may use in connection with the creation or production of your Work are tools within the Adobe Suite, and text-based models such as ChatGPT. The use of any other Generative AI tool is subject to Minted’s prior written approval. In general, the use of Generative AI tools (including Adobe) is only allowed for editing and file production workflow. In particular, generative AI tools may **not** be used to:

- Generate an entire photo or work of art for submission

- Generate a complete stationery design
- Generate an icon or an illustration within a broader design, composition, or pattern
- Generate an entire pattern with AI-generated elements, such as for the back of a card

In the interest of using this technology to support creative human work, approved generative AI tools **may** be used to:

- Ideate and brainstorm
- Create an art statement or generate design tags
- Create alternate colorways
- Retouch photos or works of art
- Extend the edges of photos or fine art images
- Extend or retouch Minted photo kit photos
- Turn a non-AI-generated element into a repeating pattern

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Whether or not we select the Work for a Prize, you may not offer for sale, sell, or submit the Work to others or otherwise publish, distribute, or reproduce the Work or allow others to do so for any purpose until the date that is 90 days after the challenge's submission deadline (the "Trial Period"). After the expiration of the Trial Period, if Minted has not notified you that it has selected the Work for a Prize, then you will be free to use the Work for any purpose. Notwithstanding the foregoing, if you have been provided an Artist-specific, branded shopping area on a subdomain of the Site by Minted (a "Store"), to the extent you self-launched products incorporating the Work prior to submitting it to the challenge, subject to the terms and conditions governing your use of the Store, you may continue to sell such products via your Store during the Trial Period. If Minted selects your Work for a Prize, your Work will be subject to these Terms and Conditions, including the applicable challenge brief.

During the Trial Period, we may display the Work in connection with use on products offered for sale to assess consumer interest, even if we have not yet selected your Work for a Prize. You hereby license us the use of your name and identifying information and image ("Artist Name") for purposes of promoting the Work, this challenge and Minted both during and after the Trial Period.

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You alone shall be responsible for the payment of any tax that arises as a result of receiving payment from Minted, as we will not withhold any taxes from the Prize or Sales Commissions paid to you.

Selection of Work for Prize or Wholesale Partner Collection after the Trial Period

Your Works, including Works that were previously self-launched via your Store, may be selected by Minted at any time after the Trial Period for a Prize or for inclusion in one or more of Minted's wholesale partner collections, in each case in exchange for the consideration offered by Minted. Minted will notify you of its selection and you may accept or reject the Prize or other consideration. If your Work is selected for a Prize

or inclusion in our wholesale partner collection and you accept, we will pay you the offered Prize or other consideration as a lump sum cash amount, which will be treated as a Prize hereunder, plus any applicable Sales Commission as set forth herein.

In the case of a Work that was previously self-launched through your store, Minted may, upon your acceptance of a Prize or other consideration, transfer or convert any products bearing the Work or any derivatives thereof, or incorporating the Work or any derivatives thereof, that you previously self-launched in your Store as Minted deems necessary, including converting any such Works into a Limited Edition designation on your Store and deducting the number of such products you sold via your Store prior to the date of such transfer from the available number of Limited Editions of such products.

To the extent that you accept the Prize or other consideration for any Work selected after the Trial Period, including for a wholesale partner collection, these Terms and Conditions will be applicable to your Work, including (i) if you are selected for a Prize, the Prizes and Sales Commissions set forth in the applicable challenge brief or Minted's communication to you, or (ii) if you are selected for a wholesale partner collection, the consideration offered by Minted, which will be treated hereunder as a Prize and shall include your grant of an exclusive license to Minted as provided herein.

General

Submission of the Work and checking the box acknowledging that you have read and agree to these Terms and Conditions and the applicable challenge brief constitutes your acceptance of these Terms and Conditions, the applicable challenge brief and Minted's general Terms and Conditions, and creates a binding contract governed by under California law, without regard to conflict of law principles. You may not assign or otherwise transfer any right or obligation herein without the prior written consent of Minted, which may be withheld in Minted's sole discretion. Minted may assign or otherwise transfer any right or obligation herein without your consent.

MANDATORY ARBITRATION: The parties acknowledge and agree that to conserve each party's time, money, and resources, and to promote a continued amicable relationship between the parties, before filing an arbitration as provided for in this section, the parties will try in good faith to resolve informally any and all claims or disputes between the parties relating to these Terms and Conditions, including your Work and the challenge ("Dispute"). If the Dispute cannot be resolved through such informal means despite each party's good faith efforts, then the Dispute may only be decided via binding arbitration in accordance with applicable rules of the American Arbitration Association. Any arbitration will be held in San Francisco, California. The arbitral tribunal's award shall be final and binding and enforceable in any court of competent jurisdiction in any jurisdiction anywhere in the world.

CLASS ACTION WAIVER: ANY ARBITRATION WILL TAKE PLACE ON AN INDIVIDUAL BASIS. Each party hereby waives the right to have any Dispute brought, heard, administered, resolved, or arbitrated as a class action, or on any class, collective, representative or mass basis.

Injunctive Relief. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in these Terms and Conditions, nothing will prevent either party from seeking preliminary injunctive relief, or interim or conservatory measures in a court of competent jurisdiction to prevent the infringement or other misuse of intellectual property rights.

ONGOING SALES COMMISSIONS:

Product	Sales Commission
Printed and “Print-It-Yourself” stationery products and fabric products incorporating the Work	6%
Art prints incorporating the Work	10%
All other products incorporating the Work	As determined by Minted upon Minted’s launch of each such product; Minted will notify you of the applicable Sales Commission for each such product
