

OFFICIAL YEAR 4 RULEBOOK



CONTEST OUTLINE

The Indigo Invitational is the world's largest and most-inclusive denim fading contest. All brands, all weights, and all comers are welcome. There's no fee to enter. Your brand-new jeans are your ticket to ride.

There are three rules that cover just about everything:

- Rule 1: Denim must be raw.
- Rule 2: Fades must be natural.
- Rule 3: Support each other.

While straightforward, these rules leave some room for interpretation. We discuss each of these rules in detail below.

NEW FOR Y4: CONFERENCES

For the first time, we are dividing the competition into conferences. The Southeast Asian faders will have their own conference, with their own prizes, and their own Top 50. This gives us the freedom to celebrate more of the incredible fades from the rest of the world, but also to recognize the depth of the denim-loving scenes in Southeast Asia. A few important points:

- Rules and submission guidelines will be the same for both conferences. Participants in both conferences must submit monthly updates via the website.

- Each conference will have its own showcases and spot prizes. We're hoping to have enough prizes to have Top 10 showcases for both conferences.
- First place finishers from each conference will go head-to-head to determine our overall winner.
- The Southeast Asian Top 50 will be selected by long-time friend of the competition Mifflin Mabalot.

NEW FOR Y4: RE(PAIR)

We have also added a new stream of the competition for those who want to return for a second lap of the track in their Year Two or Year Three pairs. We know that some of you need at least two full years to fully fade your pairs. We also know that the extra year will see some of our expert faders take their pairs to the absolute limit and beyond. A few of the finer points:

- Registration for Re(Pair) closes on May 25th, 2023.
- Registration does not commit you to competing in Re(Pair). It just holds your spot.
- Register on the website. You'll be asked to provide your last submission photo and a more recent photograph of your pair featuring the #Re(Pair) hashtag.
- Competitors are allowed to repair or alter their pairs between registration and the first day of the competition.
- We will compare registration photos with Re(Proof) photos submitted at the beginning of the competition. Pairs that have clearly been worn between registration and the competition start date will be eliminated.
- Re(Pair) contestants will only be competing against each other. They will have their own winners and their own prizes.
- Winners will be selected by the same judging panel as the Indigo Invitational.
- We will be partnering with denim repair specialists, who will provide some of our Re(Pair) prizes. We are encouraging all competitors to use these repair shops either before, during, or at the end of the competition. Remember, beautiful repairs, like our jeans, get better with age. Worn and torn repairs have a beauty all their own.

THE INDIGO INVITATIONAL: RULES

1. Denim must be raw.
 - Your competition pair must be brand new and raw (no factory-faded jeans).
 - We prefer pairs with their tags still attached.
 - We will also accept pairs without tags. If you've removed the tags, please make sure to submit high-resolution photos that show that the pair is in brand-new condition. You may be asked to submit additional photographs via email.
 - Keep your jeans dry until the start date. No soaking or washing before the contest begins (one-washed factory pairs are fine).
 - Except for trying on for fit, first wear should be on January 1st.
 - Other than hemming, alterations before the start date are strongly discouraged.
2. Fades must be natural.

- No sanding or pinching. Let the fades develop naturally.
 - No bleach or other caustic agents (you can use a little bleach in the wash, but do not apply bleach or any other lightening agent directly to your denim).
 - Ocean washes are fine, but sand scrubs are not. You can go for a swim in your jeans, but leave the sand on the beach.
 - Starching is strongly discouraged.
 - The Golden Rule: Do *nothing* that gives you an unfair edge over your competitors.
 - Wash (by hand or machine) as many times as you like.
 - Repair your jeans as many times as necessary. Hand repairs (e.g., sashiko or patching) are encouraged.
3. Support each other
- This is a tight-knit community with a shared love of raw denim and fades. We encourage and support each other. Abuse in any form will not be tolerated.

HOW TO ENTER

To enter the competition, complete all of the required fields on the Indigo Invitational Registration Page.

When you have submitted your registration, a confirmation message will appear on the screen. You may also receive an email confirmation, but these automatic emails don't always work.

Registration will be open until January 15th, 2024. If your jeans will be arriving after January 15th, follow the instructions for late submissions below.

We will begin accepting raw proof (see below) on the website on the 30th of December, 2023.

RAW PROOF

All competitors must provide raw proof. Raw proof is simply front and back photographs of your brand-new jeans. These photos are how we confirm that we are all starting with brand new pairs on the first day of the competition.

Raw proof can take one of two forms:

1. One picture of your jeans folded with the tags still on them and another of the front side of the jeans (preferred)
2. If the tags have been removed, please make sure that you submit high-resolution photographs that we can look at closely to ensure that your jeans are brand new. You may be asked to submit close-ups via email. Jeans that show any signs of wear will not be eligible.

On December 30th, we will release the Y4 raw proof hash tag. This hash tag must be included with all raw proof photographs. See RAW PROOF and UPDATE examples below.

NB: Do not wear your jeans until after you have submitted raw proof and your first gallery.

UPDATE GALLERIES

On or around the first of every month, all competitors must submit two unedited photographs (front and back) on the website. You'll receive an email with a link to the submission page around the end of each month.

Either fit pics or lay flats are fine. Try to be consistent from month to month.

NB: Only those who submit updates EVERY month will be eligible for the Top 50 and raffle prizes. If a crisis intervenes, making an on-time update impossible, email us as soon as you can.

When taking your update photographs, fill the frame with your jeans. Highlight your jeans, not your outfit.

NB: Do not edit official updates.

With all photographs, remember to consider things like the lighting and the background. We encourage all competitors to read our [denim photography guide](#).

NB: Instagram and Facebook posts do NOT count as update galleries. Updates must be submitted through the website.

NB: By agreeing to participate in the contest, you agree that photos submitted via email, to the competition website, or posted in the FB group can be used at the organizers' discretion. We promise to use all photos tastefully and responsibly.

LATE ENTRIES

Late starts are fine. If you're waiting for your pair to arrive, make sure to register before January 15th. As soon as your jeans arrive, email us your raw proof. Remember to include the hashtag in your raw proof photos.

JUDGING

Judging will be conducted in three stages:

1. After 365 days of fading, the organizers will pick the top 50.
2. The top 50 will be posted on the website and registered competitors will be encouraged to vote for their favorites.
 - The top 16 will automatically go on to the next round.
 - The organizers will select 4 deserving wildcard pairs.
3. The 20 finalists will be reviewed by a panel of judges (denim industry insiders, bloggers, and influencers). The judges will provide organizers with a ranked Top 10. Together, these Top 10s will give us our official Top 10.

NB: Panelists can participate in the competition, but they are not eligible for prizes.

NB: Sponsors are eligible for prizes. They have the option to pass their prize pick down to the next fader in line, but they are not obligated to do so. Everybody is eligible except for the founders and those on the judging panel.

SAMPLE RAW PROOF & UPDATE GALLERIES

RAW PROOF



LAY FLATS



FIT PICTURES



SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

The **Facebook** group will be the main liaison point for all Indigo Invitational updates and conversations. The group will remain private for the duration of the contest; only approved members will be able to view, like, and comment on posts. Observers are welcome, but we want to restrict the membership to denim enthusiasts.

You can also find us on [Instagram](#). We'll be posting highlights from the group, engaging with denim lovers and makers all over the world, and sharing news from our sponsors. Use the #indigoinvitational, #indigoinvitationalY4, and #tourdenimes hashtags liberally.

Finally, when engaging with posts on either FB or IG, follow the golden rule: don't disparage other competitors' efforts. Treat female competitors respectfully. Any racist or misogynist comments will result in immediate expulsion from the competition. We're all here to have fun. That fun should *never* be had at another competitor's expense.

If you have any questions, you can reach the organizers [here](#).