

OFFICIAL RULEBOOK



CONTEST OUTLINE

The Indigo Invitational is the world's best and most-inclusive denim fading contest. We're not going to tell you what jeans to wear (all brands are welcome). We're not going to separate you into categories or weight classes (all weights are treated equally). And we're not going to charge you anything to compete (and it's our promise to you that we never will).

All you need is a brand-new pair of raw denim ready to be worn for the first time on the contest start date.

The rules are straightforward:

- Everybody starts at the same time with a brand-new pair of raw denim
- Contest lasts for one full year

- Natural fades only
- Monthly updates (emailed to us on or around the first of each month)

When we started this competition, we expected some degree of gamesmanship and jostling for position, but it immediately became clear that the Indigo Invitational was going to be a competition like no other. From the first, our faders encouraged each other with advice and support. We still haven't had a single instance of problematic behaviour or insulting language.

The Indigo Invitational may have started as a competition, but at its heart, at the core of the yarn, it's a tight knit community. We call this the Indigo Spirit, and nothing is more important to us than preserving this spirit as we carry forward into Year Two and beyond.

THE RULES

1. Brand new raw denim ONLY (no pre-faded jeans).
 - Competitors will need to submit raw proof (photographic evidence that their jeans are brand new) on September 30th.
 - For raw proof, we prefer pictures of your denim folded with the tags still on.
 - We will also accept pairs without tags, but you'll need to send us close-up photographs (crotch, seat, backs of knees, etc.) shortly before the start date to verify that the jeans are in unworn condition.
 - Sanforized or one-wash pairs are allowed (provided that they come from the factory like this).
 - Except for trying on for fit, first wear should be on October 1st.
 - Except for hemming (preferably at the point of purchase), no alterations before the start date. Once the competition has started, you can alter your jeans yourself or have them professionally tailored at any point.
2. Fades must be 100% natural.
 - No sanding or pinching. Let the fades develop naturally.
 - No bleach or other caustic agents
 - Starching is 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.
 - Professional repairs are also allowed.
3. Competitors must submit updates on or around the first of every month (following the submission guidelines covered in detail below)

NB: Only those who have submitted updates every month will be eligible for the top 50. We will be somewhat flexible if some kind of crisis intervenes, so if you've got a good excuse for missing an update, reach out to us.

HOW TO ENTER

To enter the competition, register through the website, completing all the required fields. You'll receive an email confirming your registration. Registration will be open from August 25th to October 10th. If your jeans will be arriving after the start date, follow the instructions for late submissions below.

To complete your entry, email us your competitor info, raw proof, and your first update gallery between September 30th and October 7th. Follow the submission guidelines below.

COMPETITOR INFO

With all submissions, please include the following competitor info:

1. Competitor name
2. Denim brand
3. Denim model
4. Denim weight
5. Optional: Instagram handle, number of soaks/washes, denim adventure stories, etc.

RAW PROOF

All competitors must provide raw proof (photographic evidence that allows us to confirm that your jeans are brand new on the first day of the competition).

Raw proof can take one of two forms:

1. Pictures of your jeans folded with the tags still on them (preferred)
2. If the tags have been removed, submit close-up pictures of key fade areas (crotch, seat, backs of knees, and hems). Jeans that show *any* signs of wear will not be eligible.

On September 30th, we'll release the raw proof hash tag. This hash tag must be included with all raw proof photographs (but not with your first update gallery).

UPDATE GALLERIES

On or around the first of every month, all competitors must submit an update gallery that includes either fit pics (front, back, and side) or lay flats (front and back). Fit pics are preferred, but lay flats are perfectly acceptable.

NB: No editing update galleries.

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

Optional: Along with your required fit pics or lay flats, you can include as many photographs as you like. You can edit these photographs if you like. We post daily updates on our social media accounts, and we'll post your photographs if they catch our eye. Get creative.

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. All galleries must be submitted to the competition [email](#).

LATE ENTRIES

We will be allowing late entries until November 15th. However, competitors need to register their intent to compete before registration closes on October 10th. If you're planning on starting late, follow these guidelines:

1. Send an email to submissions@indigoinvitational.com including the following:
 1. Your name
 2. The denim you'll be fading (brand and model)
 3. The approximate date you'll be receiving your jeans
2. As soon as your jeans arrive, follow the guidelines above for Raw Proof and for you update gallery. Remember to include the raw proof hashtag in your raw proof photos.

NB: By agreeing to participate in the contest, you agree that all proof of raw and fade progress photos collected by the organizers either in the FB group or through the submissions@indigoinvitational.com can be used at the organizers' discretion to promote the contest and update the contest's followers. You also agree for organizers to submit your photographs to third parties (our judges) for review. We promise to use all photos tastefully and responsibly.

JUDGING

One of the few changes we're making heading into Year Two is our judging format. Judging will be conducted in three stages:

1. After 365 days of fading, the founders and interested sponsors will pick the top 50.
2. The top 50 will be posted in the Facebook group, and the members of the group will vote for their favorites.
 - The top 16 will automatically go on to the next round.
 - The founders will select 4 deserving wildcard pairs.
3. The 20 finalists will be reviewed by a panel of judges (denim bloggers and influencers). The judges will deliberate and decide our top 5 winners.

Our judging panel will not be finalized for some time. If you are a denim blogger or influencer and you want to help us pick our winners, reach out to us [here](#).

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

SAMPLE RAW PROOF & UPDATE GALLERIES

RAW PROOF



LAY FLATS



FIT PICTURES



SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDLINES

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. Do NOT encourage friends or followers to flood the group to boost votes. This is not a popularity contest. We all should want the winner to be the best fader—not the person with the largest social media following. Any clear

evidence of vote tampering or other unfair conduct with regards to the final voting will result in immediate disqualification.

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 hashtag 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. 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 founders [here](#).