

Digital Cameras – FAST FACTS

<http://georgeholt.riverinainstitute.wikispaces.net/Intro+to+Digital+Photography>

Camera Types

	Advantages	Disadvantages
Super Compact	Easy to carry, convenient,	Hard to hold steady, not much room for quality lenses. Good 2 nd camera.
Point and shoot	Compact, usually very cheap, easy to use	Compromise camera, Reasonable shots,
Big Zoom Cameras	Great for distance shots, versatile, easier to hold	Be careful to stay steady when shooting at full zoom. Bulkier to carry. Usually more expensive\$
Pro-sumer – Digital SLR	Great shots, ability to change lenses, lots of options.	Harder to use, expensive, bulky
Weather resistant	Several models that are weather resistant – this doesn't always mean that they are weather "proof"- read the warnings	

Camera Features

	Advantages	Disadvantages
Zoom	Great for getting "closer". Sports and nature photography	Be careful of camera shake at full zoom, dust and haze in the air at long distance shots, Avoid " Digital Zoom " camera modes as they lower the quality of photos.
Flash	Good on sunny days to light up shadows. Use flash modes to control eg Red eye, Forced on, forced off.	Check your range typically only 3-4m, hopeless at longer distances in low light conditions
Resolution eg Megapixels	Resolution is a measure of how many pixels or pieces of data are captured. Vital feature of a quality camera – the higher the MP the better. Eg 8MP+. Try to shoot at full resolution.	
ISO	Amplifies the light levels	Can cause "digital noise" distortion of the photo at high values eg 400+. Use camera modes to avoid this
Camera Modes	Gives easy control of the camera. Try Sport mode for most of your shots.	Try to avoid just using Auto all the time.
Batteries	Batteries always seem to go flat at the wrong time, always carry a spare.	
Memory	High resolution(MP) cameras produce big files sizes, Carry spare memory, download photos to PC or disk often. Shoot heaps then cull hard!!	
Anti shake	Be careful of anti shake cameras. It does help but you still need to try and stay steady when you shoot.	

Camera Modes

	Advantages	Disadvantages
Auto	Easy, fast to select, hassle free	Boring! No options. Be brave and try other modes
Sport	Fast shutter speed, short depth of field. Great all round option	Hard to focus on fast moving subjects. Use a half press to set focus range.
Landscape	Slow shutter speed, Long depth of field,	Avoid in low light conditions
Portrait	Short Depth of field, usually faster shutter speeds	Short depth of field at close ranges.
Flash Modes	Use the flash modes to control light at short distances. Forced Flash ON is great for lighting up shadows. Forced OFF is great if you choose a tripod to stabilise your camera.	Auto Flash is a problem as the range to the subject will affect how effective it is. Flash only reaches 3-4m on most cameras.



Digital Photography

Tips and Traps

Digital photography is a fun and exciting hobby or career. Here is some advice from a range of photographers that you can use to improve your own work. Practice the tips and avoid the traps.



The Tips

- Take lots of photos – They effectively cost nothing so why be stingy.
- Critically analyse your photos and work out why it worked or why it didn't.
- Cull Hard - Discard photos that you are unhappy with then go take some more.
- Organise your photos into folders so you can find them and use them later.
- Rename or even batch rename your photos with descriptive names eg WaggaTAFE07112008.jpg
- Use the labelling and search features of your photo editing software to describe your photos and then find the ones you want.
- Backup your photo's – You can fit at least 300 high quality images on a single CD.(approx 2000 on a DVD disk.
- Take photos with other people and learn from each other – even better take a picnic and make a day of it, HAVE FUN!! Group photography excursions are fun and productive.
- Look at other peoples photos and borrow their ideas.
- We are surrounded by “tripods” that will help us to steady the camera eg. Chairs, tables, fence posts, cars, rocks, tables, walls, doors etc.. USE THEM!
- View art shows, galleries and internet sites that celebrate photography. Learn from the masters.
- Practice with your camera and get to know its features and controls.
- Be creative and brave in composing your photo's. Learn from the composition hints of others. Eg. Rule of thirds, Get closer- look them in the eye, use perspective, leading lines, macros etc.
- Carry you camera with you so you don't miss those magic moments.
- Use photography to “tell a story”. Photo's can carry a powerful message to the viewer.
- Learn about your computer so you can display and manipulate your favourite photo's.
- Practice the “half press” to set focus and exposure before shooting.
- Use flash to light up shadows on bright sunny days
- Carry a little toolkit – Camera bag, spare batteries and memory cards, Tripod, Cleaning Kit, Zip Lock bags
- Use software eg. Picasa or Photoshop elements to optimise(improve) your photos.



The Traps

- Don't bump or shake your camera as you press the shutter. Ultra compact lightweight cameras are very susceptible to this. Consider using a tripod or lean against a solid object.
- Don't blindly trust the anti-shake mode of your camera – stay steady.
- Avoid photos that are all light or all dark. Good photo's should have a good spread of tones and good contrast. Use the histogram to evaluate the spread of tones.
- Don't get caught out with shutter lag. Get to know your camera and how long the shutter lag is then plan to work around it.
- Don't use digital zoom unless you have to. Optical zoom is a better option as digital zoom discards data and tries to “guess” replacement data.
- Avoid digital noise eg ISO 400+.. Both high ISO settings and long exposures contribute to digital noise. Photoshop can be used to reduce noise if necessary.
- Don't use a flash unless you are within its range. Eg. 3-5m
- Don't stage people in uncomfortable poses or groups and then expect them to smile naturally.









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Digital photography Links

Photography advice and tutorials

-  [Steve Parish -Photograph Australia](#)
-  [Kodak Photography Tips](#)
-  [Photonhead – Great site to learn about cameras and how they work.](#)
-  <http://www.shortcourses.com/choosing/contents.htm> - Good online book on digital photography
-  [How to Take Travel Pictures Like a Pro](#) - Good site dealing with Photography tips and techniques.
-  [Explore Digital Photography with Windows XP](#)











Cameras Reviews and Features

-  <http://www.steves-digicams.com> **Excellent Review and features site**
-  [Digital Photography Review](#) - A great site for reviews on Digital cameras.
-  www.digitalcameras.com.au
-  [Photo Review](#)

Camera Manufacturers

-  <http://www.olympus.com.au/>
-  <http://www.sony.com.au>
-  <http://www.kodak.com>
-  <http://www.canon.com.au/>
-  <http://www.fujifilm.co.uk/digital/>
-  http://welcome.hp.com/country/au/en/prodserv/digital_photography.html

Photographic Exhibitions

-  <http://www.michaelscottlees.com.au/index.php>
-  www.digital-photo-forum.com
-  [Worth 1000](#)
-  [Steve Parish Exhibits](#)
-  [Ken Duncan](#)
-  [Night photographer](#)
-  [The Digital Photography Exhibit](#)
-  [Extreme Instability](#) An amazing collection of extreme weather shots.
-  [Passion for Pixels](#)
-  [John Turner Gallery - Blue Mountains](#)





Recommended Software

The following software provides a wide range of options to manage and manipulate images. Prices range from completely free for Picasa and Irfanview to a modest cost for Photoshop Elements.

Software	
Photoshop Elements	An Adobe product for managing and manipulating images. Great for more complex changes to images.
Picasa	A FREE software package from Google that can organise and do basic fixes on photos
Irfanview	A Free software package for doing basic changes to images and creating slideshows
Photo Story	A FREE tool from Microsoft for creating slideshows with effects, transitions and background sounds.

Recommended Books

I've found the following collection of books terrific and don't hesitate to recommend them to you. Check out your local library as well as the TAFE library.

-  Photograph Australia by Steve Parish
-  Idiots guide to Digital Photography by Steven Greenberg
-  The Digital Photographers A-Z by Peter Cope - a dictionary of terms and concepts.
-  The Book of Digital Photography by Chris George



Picasa Basics: What is Picasa?

Picasa is free photo management software that helps you instantly find, edit and share all the photos on your PC. Picasa automatically locates all your photos (even ones you forgot you had) and sorts them into visual folders organized by name, size, or date. You can drag and drop to arrange your folders and make albums to create new groups. Picasa makes sure your photos are always organized.

Picasa also makes advanced editing simple by putting one-click fixes and powerful effects at your fingertips. And Picasa makes it a snap to share your photos - you can email, upload to an online album, print photos at home, make gift CDs, and even post photos to Blogger.



Organize

Manage your photos in one place, and find photos you forgot you had



Edit

Eliminate scratches & blemishes, fix red-eye, crop and more



Create

Turn photos into movies, collages, slideshows and more



Share

Upload seamlessly to Picasa Web Albums to share with friends, family & the world

You can download Picasa from <http://picasa.google.com/download/index.html>

http://picasa.google.com.au/intl/en/#utm_source=en-all-more&utm_campaign=en-pic&utm_medium=et

