

What kind of digital camera is best for me?

In order to choose the right camera--one with the right set of features at the right price--you'll need to figure out what you'll be doing with it. Match your needs to one of these user profiles.

User profiles: Snapshotter | Trendsetter | Business user | Serious amateur | Budget buyer | Undecided

{jumi [hiqmf/jumi_forms.php] [hiqmf/content_camera.html] [100%] [70] [no]}

SnapshotterI want to take photos that I can e-mail to friends and family, post on the Web, or print in sizes smaller than 8x10 inches. I'd like a digital camera that is easy enough for the whole family to use and small enough to take anywhere. I'll be printing on an inexpensive, all-purpose inkjet printer, though I'll consider buying a photo printer if I like the pictures enough.

THE SPECS THAT MATTER:Resolution4 megapixels or greaterPrice\$150 to \$300Lens typeZoom (range encompassing at least 38mm to 114mm, 35mm equivalent)Storage mediaInternal memory, CompactFlash, Memory Stick, xD-Picture Card, or Secure Digital/MultiMediaCardPhoto file formatJPEGInterfacesUSB, NTSC/PAL television connectionExposure controlsAutomatic, programmed scene modes, exposure compensation (for tweaking the automatic exposure)Focus controlsAutomaticFlash modesAutomatic, fill, red-eye reductionSoftwarePhoto stitching, photo album, slide showMultimediaVideo-clip recording with soundCool features to look forDirect-to-printer (PictBridge) output compatibility; in-camera red-eye removal; automatic exposure fix; optical or mechanical image stabilization**Trendsetter**
I like to buy the newest, shiniest toys before anyone else does. I want to impress my friends and business associates with the latest technologies and coolest features, but not if it makes the product too complicated to use. I care about how much I spend, though it's not one of my top concerns.

THE SPECS THAT MATTER:Resolution7 megapixels or greaterPriceLess than \$1,000Lens typeZoom (range encompassing at least 36mm to 108mm, 35mm equivalent)Storage mediaInternal memory, CompactFlash, Memory Stick, xD-Picture Card, or Secure Digital/MultiMediaCardPhoto file formatJPEGInterfacesUSB, NTSC/PAL television connectionExposure controlsAutomatic, programmed scene modes, exposure compensation (for tweaking the automatic exposure)Focus controlsAutomaticFlash modesAutomatic, fill, red-eye reductionSoftwarePhoto-stitching, photo album, slide showMultimediaVGA (640x480), 30-frame-per-second video-clip recording with sound and functioning zoom during videoCool features to look forUltrapact design, Webcam capabilities, voice recording, Wi-Fi support, large LCD, simultaneous video and photo capture, 12X or greater optical zoom, optical or mechanical image stabilization**Back to top****Business user**

I need to be able to shoot onsite or in the office, photograph products and people for ads and publicity in print and on the Web, and get professional-looking results without hiring a pro. I need to get prints in a variety of ways, including from a color laser printer or quick-print shop. I have to share the camera with my coworkers.

THE SPECS THAT MATTER:Resolution5 megapixels or greaterPrice\$400 to \$700Lens typeZoom (range encompassing at least 36mm to 130mm, 35mm equivalent)Storage mediaCompactFlash, Memory Stick, xD-Picture Card, or Secure Digital/MultiMediaCardPhoto file formatJPEG or TIFFInterfacesUSB, NTSC/PAL television connectionExposure controlsAutomatic, aperture- and shutter-priority, manual, choice of metering modes, autobracketingFocus controlsAutomatic, manualFlash modesAutomatic, fill, red-eye reduction, external flash compatibilitySoftwarePhoto editor; collaborative image sharingMultimediaVoice recording, built-in speaker for audio playbackCool features to look forSupport for digital security, WiFi, text-capture mode, world clock**Serious amateur**

I want to shoot stills and video clips for the Web, use creative effects when shooting and manipulating images, have professional-level control, output prints that are 8x10 inches or larger on a high-quality photo printer, and use accessories and different lenses.

THE SPECS THAT MATTER:Resolution5 megapixels or greaterPrice\$500 and upLens typeSupports lens converters or interchangeable lenses or zoom with widest focal range possibleStorage mediaHigh-capacity CompactFlash, Hitachi Microdrive, or Secure Digital/MultiMediaCardPhoto file formatJPEG, TIFF (YCbCr or RGB), RAWInterfacesUSB 2.0 or FireWireExposure controlsAutomatic, aperture- and shutter-priority, manual, choice of metering modes, autobracketingFocus controlsAutomatic with selectable focus points, manualFlash modesAutomatic, fill, slow sync, hot shoe or contact for external flashSoftwareFull-featured photo editor, software for PC-controlled captureMultimediaVoice annotationCool features to look forCompatibility with existing 35mm-camera lenses and accessories, customizable user modes, dynamic histogram display, optical or mechanical image stabilization**Budget buyer**

I want to find a basic digicam costing less than \$200 that will let me post snapshots on the Web; e-mail them to friends; print them in small sizes (4x6 or smaller) on my inexpensive, multipurpose inkjet printer; and get me up and running

quickly without requiring me to read the manual. I want a camera that will satisfy me for a few years.

THE SPECS THAT MATTER:Resolution5 megapixels or greaterPriceLess than \$200Lens typeFixed (between 38mm and 55mm, 35mm equivalent) or zoom (range at least encompassing 38mm to 76mm, 35mm equivalent)Storage mediaInternal memory, CompactFlash Type I, Memory Stick, xD-Picture Card, or Secure Digital/MultiMediaCardPhoto file formatJPEGInterfacesUSB, NTSC/PAL television connectionExposure controlsAutomatic, exposure compensation (for tweaking the automatic exposure)Focus controlsAutofocus or fixed focusFlash modesAutomatic, fill, red-eye reductionSoftwareBasic photo editorCool features to look forWebcam capabilities, automatic scene modes, continuous-shooting mode, autofocus assist lampUndecided

I want a camera that's easy to use but that I can grow into if I get hooked on digital photography. I want to be able to print good-looking photos at sizes smaller than 8x10 inches on my inexpensive inkjet printer, but I'd like prints that will look OK if I decide to print larger or get a better printer. I want to spend less than \$500.

THE SPECS THAT MATTER:Resolution7 megapixels or greaterPrice\$300 to \$500Lens typeZoom (range encompassing at least 34mm to 136mm, 35mm equivalent)Storage mediaInternal memory, CompactFlash, Memory Stick, xD-Picture Card, or Secure Digital/MultiMediaCardPhoto file formatJPEG, TIFF, RAWInterfacesUSB, NTSC/PAL television connectionExposure controlsAutomatic, aperture- and shutter-priority, manual, choice of metering modes, autobracketingFocus controlsAutomatic, manualFlash modesAutomatic, fill, slow syncSoftwareMidrange photo editorMultimediaVideo-clip recording with soundCool features to look forRemote control, dynamic histogram display, compatibility with lens converters and accessories; built-in help features; mechanical or optical image stabilization