

# How to buy a digital camera



## Table of Contents

---

### **A Quick Note**

#### [About the LCD Screen / Monitor](#)

Email, printing, webpage, insurance purposes, photography...

### **Step 1**

#### [Determine your PRIMARY USE](#)

Email, printing, webpage, insurance purposes, photography...

### **Step 2**

#### [What RESOLUTION would YOU like?](#)

Quality, compression, printing sizes...

### **Step 3**

#### [How much MEMORY do YOU need?](#)

What IS memory? Types of memory...

### **Step 4**

#### [Know the types of ZOOM](#)

Optical zoom, digital zoom...

### **Step 5**

#### [Consider STORAGE ACCESSORIES](#)

Putting your pictures on your computer...

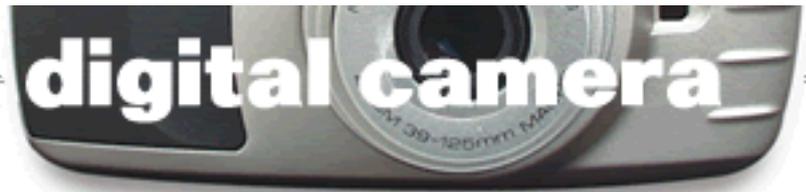
### **Step 6**

#### [What about BATTERIES?](#)

NiMH (Nickel Metal Hydride), 3-volt...

jump  
to...

# How to buy a digital camera



## overview

### A Quick Note About the LCD Screen

#### Step 1

Determine your  
PRIMARY USE

#### Step 2

What RESOLUTION do YOU  
NEED?

#### Step 3

How much  
MEMORY do YOU NEED?

#### Step 4

Know the types of ZOOM

#### Step 5

Consider the STORAGE  
ACCESSORIES

#### Step 6

What about BATTERIES?

TABLE OF CONTENTS



## About the LCD Screen / Monitor

This small screen (usually under 2 inches) allows you to:

- See your picture before and after you take it (instead of the viewfinder)
- Review the pictures you want to keep, delete those that you don't!
- Display the camera menu options



[next](#)

jump  
to...

# How to buy a digital camera



## overview

### A Quick Note

[About the LCD Screen](#)

#### Step 1

**Determine your  
PRIMARY USE**

#### Step 2

[What RESOLUTION do YOU  
NEED?](#)

#### Step 3

[How much  
MEMORY do YOU NEED?](#)

#### Step 4

[Know the types of ZOOM](#)

#### Step 5

[Consider the STORAGE  
ACCESSORIES](#)

#### Step 6

[What about BATTERIES?](#)

[TABLE OF CONTENTS](#)

### Step 1

## Determine your PRIMARY USE

### 1. If you are using your camera **only for webpages, email or record keeping:**

You should probably purchase a: **Less than 1 MEGA Pixels (million pixel) Digital Camera** These cost efficient cameras take pictures quickly and easily for use on a computer. We would NOT recommend this type of camera if you are planning to *print* your pictures or use this camera instead of a film camera (see below).

- or -

### 2. If you would like a **high-quality camera to print pictures:**

You should probably purchase a: **MEGA Pixels (million pixel) Digital Camera** There are different types of MEGA Pixel cameras, so familiarize yourself with the technology to find the camera that suits you best.

[previous](#) | [next](#)

# How to buy a digital camera

## overview

**A Quick Note**  
[About the LCD Screen](#)

**Step 1**  
[Determine your PRIMARY USE](#)

**Step 2**  
**What RESOLUTION do YOU NEED?**

**Step 3**  
[How much MEMORY do YOU NEED?](#)

**Step 4**  
[Know the types of ZOOM](#)

**Step 5**  
[Consider the STORAGE ACCESSORIES](#)

**Step 6**  
[What about BATTERIES?](#)

[TABLE OF CONTENTS](#)

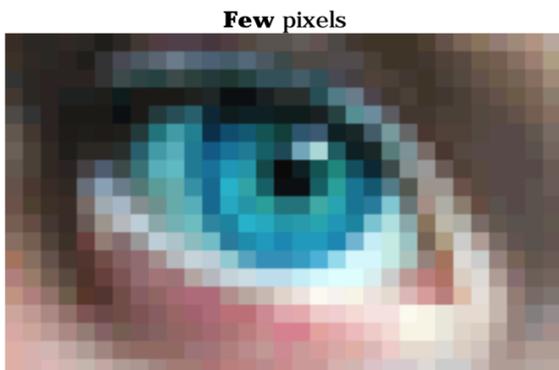
## Step 2 What RESOLUTION do YOU NEED?

**You MUST KNOW this!**

Digital cameras have different *resolutions* (quality levels) that define the power of the optics. Now, **WHAT ARE MEGA Pixels?**

Images are made out of little squares called "pixels".

THE MORE "PIXELS" AN IMAGE HAS, THE BETTER THE QUALITY.



**MEGA Pixels** are actually a notation to express **one million pixels.**



**Question:**  
**How many 'MEGA Pixels' should I be looking for in my digital camera?**

**Answer:**  
It depends on how large you would like to print your pictures (see chart below).

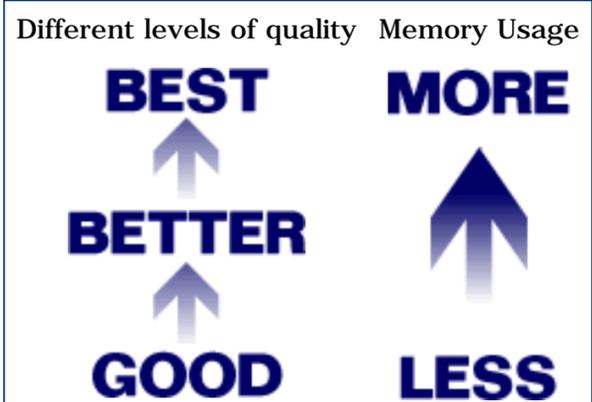
MEGA Pixels CCD	Maximum "photo-quality" picture size
Less than 1 million pixels	For web or screen only
1 million pixels	Up to 5" x 7"
2 million pixels	Up to 8" x 10"
3 million pixels	Up to 11" x 14"

**Note:** You *can* print larger pictures than mentioned here, however those prints would not be "photo-quality", and would have a 'pixelated' look (see the image above title "few pixels").

## What about image QUALITY & COMPRESSION?

Every camera allows you to select different compression options which affect the quality of each picture.

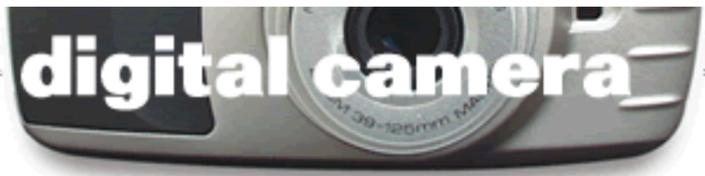
**WHY?**  
Because different compression methods allow you to take *more* or *less* pictures at a time. This deals with memory, which is our next section!



**higher quality**



**lower quality**



## overview

**A Quick Note**  
[About the LCD Screen](#)

**Step 1**  
[Determine your PRIMARY USE](#)

**Step 2**  
[What RESOLUTION do YOU NEED?](#)

**Step 3**  
**How much MEMORY do YOU NEED?**

**Step 4**  
[Know the types of ZOOM](#)

**Step 5**  
[Consider the STORAGE ACCESSORIES](#)

**Step 6**  
[What about BATTERIES?](#)

[TABLE OF CONTENTS](#)

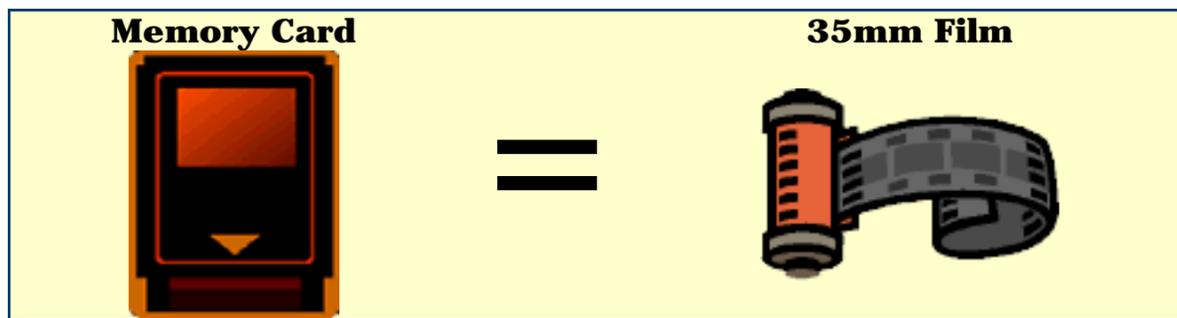
### Step 3

## How much MEMORY do YOU NEED?

*What IS memory?*

Pictures on digital cameras are stored on a removable MEMORY CARD.

Pictures on a regular film camera are stored on film.



Since memory cards are re-usable, you usually only need one! (unlike regular film)

**TWO types of memory that do the same thing:**

- CompactFlash™
- SmartMedia™

Size reference

Compact Flash

3.5" Floppy Disk

Both these formats basically **DO THE SAME THING**. You can understand these differences in the same way that VHS and BETA differ, except that *neither is 'better' than the other*.

Oh, and remember that each camera can only accept ONE TYPE OF MEMORY OR ANOTHER.

Memory cards also come in different storage capacity sizes:

- 8 Meg or MB
- 16 Meg or MB
- 32 Meg or MB
- 48 Meg or MB
- 64 Meg or MB
- 128 Meg or MB



SmartMedia



## Now, which Memory Card SIZE is RIGHT FOR YOU?

Question



Ask yourself this:

**How many rolls of film do I usually take with me when using my camera?**

Once you've figured it out, count how many exposures that is:  
 1 roll = 24 or 36 exposures      2 rolls = 48 or 72 exposures

## Use this chart to find out approximately how much memory you will need:

On average, shooting at the best quality, you will need:

Type of Camera	Pictures / Roll	Memory Needed
1 MEGA Pixels CCD	24	8 MB
	36	16 MB
	96	32 MB
2 MEGA Pixels CCD	24	32 MB
	36	32 MB
	64	64 MB
3 MEGA Pixels CCD	24	48 MB
	36	64 MB
	64	128 MB

**Note:** If you reduce the quality of the images, you can double, or even triple, the amount of pictures that you can take at a time.

Beware of manufacturers' claims of the amount of pictures a digital camera can take. They will often claim many pictures without mentioning that they would be at a lower resolution. Always pay attention to the maximum resolution and memory card capacity.



**BEWARE**

# How to buy a digital camera



## overview

**A Quick Note**

[About the LCD Screen](#)

**Step 1**

[Determine your PRIMARY USE](#)

**Step 2**

[What RESOLUTION do YOU NEED?](#)

**Step 3**

[How much MEMORY do YOU NEED?](#)

**Step 4**  
**Know the types of ZOOM**

**Step 5**

[Consider the STORAGE ACCESSORIES](#)

**Step 6**

[What about BATTERIES?](#)

[TABLE OF CONTENTS](#)

**Step 4**

## Know the types of ZOOM

Digital cameras usually offer one or two types of zoom:

### 1. Optical Zoom

Changes the magnification of images with the actual optical glass before the images reach the imaging sensor. A *true* zoom.

### 2. Digital Zoom

Crops then enlarges the image digitally after using the optical zoom, causing a slight loss in resolution. It basically does the same thing as increasing the size of an image using computer software.

example product description :

- Compact and light
- 1.3 million pixels CCD
- 3x optical / 2x digital zoom
- 1.6-inch LCD monitor
- Built in flash
- USB interface

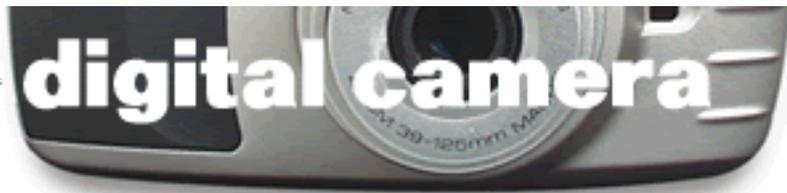
**NOTE:** Though cameras do use both types of zoom, it is preferable to have a higher optical zoom to increase the quality of the image. Digital zoom will definitely also do the job right.

Question: **What does "2x" or "3x" mean?**

Answer: It simply indicates the **power of the zoom**. A "2x" zoom will make things 2 times bigger, a "3x" zoom will make them 3 times bigger, and so on...



# How to buy a digital camera



## overview

**A Quick Note**

[About the LCD Screen](#)

**Step 1**

[Determine your](#)

[PRIMARY USE](#)

**Step 2**

[What RESOLUTION do YOU](#)

[NEED?](#)

**Step 3**

[How much](#)

[MEMORY do YOU NEED?](#)

**Step 4**

[Know the types of ZOOM](#)

**Step 5**

**Consider the STORAGE ACCESSORIES**

**Step 6**

[What about BATTERIES?](#)

[TABLE OF CONTENTS](#)

**Step 5**

## Consider the STORAGE ACCESSORIES

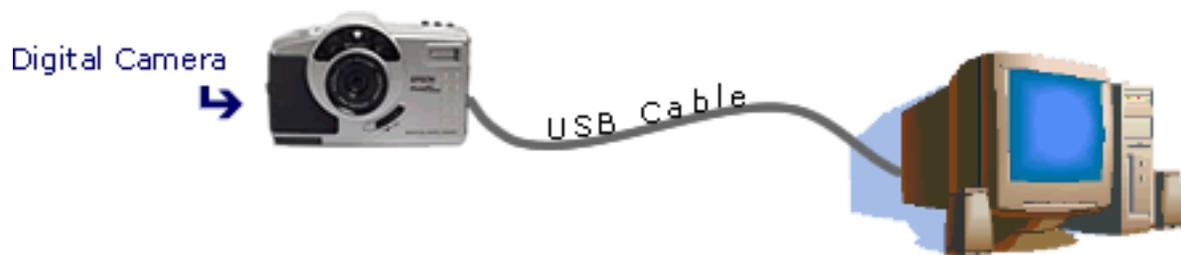
### ACCESSORIES

*Putting your pictures on a computer!*

There are 3 ways to "upload" your pictures onto a computer:

#### 1. Direct Connection

A lot of digital cameras come with "USB connectivity" which allows you to plug your camera *directly into your computer's* USB port (you must have Windows 98/ME/2000 or a Mac for this).



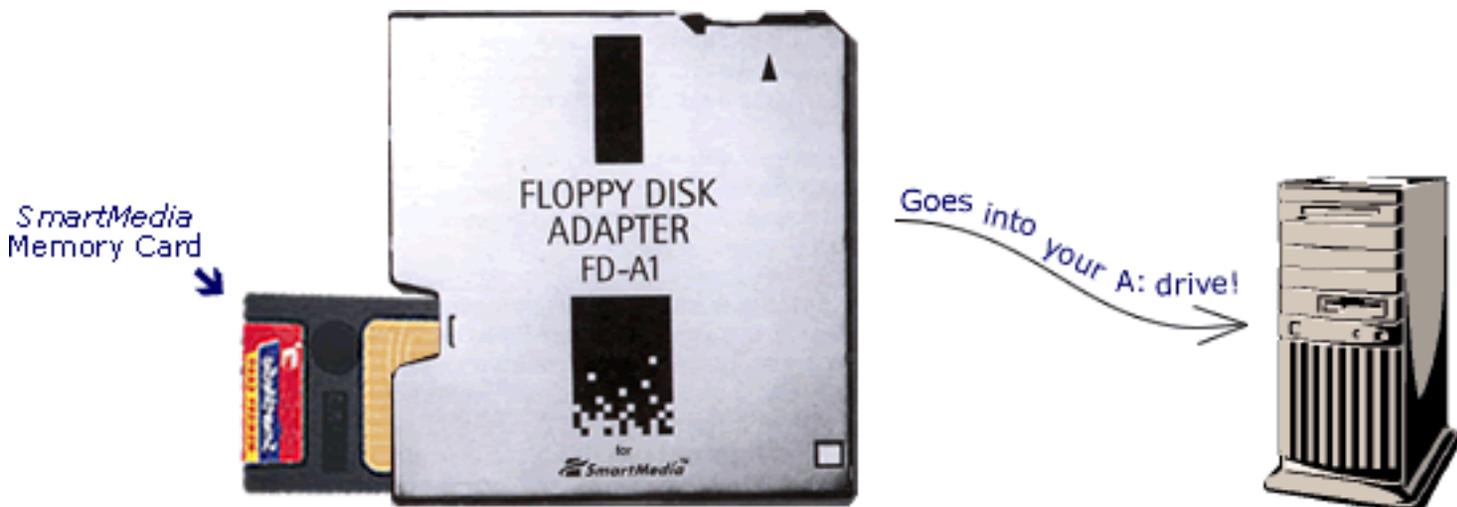
#### 2. Card Reader

Card readers are small, external devices that let you download pictures from your memory card to your computer. Once connected, your computer treats it as another drive.

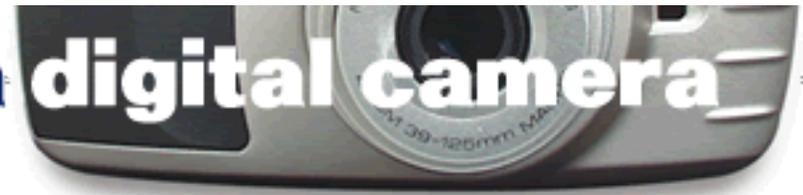


#### 3. Floppy Disk Adapter

These adapters make *SmartMedia* memory cards readable by fitting into your current 3.5" floppy drive. Just slip the card into the adapter and read files from it like a regular disk!



# How to buy a digital camera



## overview

**A Quick Note**  
[About the LCD Screen](#)

**Step 1**  
[Determine your  
PRIMARY USE](#)

**Step 2**  
[What RESOLUTION do YOU  
NEED?](#)

**Step 3**  
[How much  
MEMORY do YOU NEED?](#)

**Step 4**  
[Know the types of ZOOM](#)

**Step 5**  
[Consider the STORAGE  
ACCESSORIES](#)

**Step 6**  
**What about  
BATTERIES?**

[TABLE OF CONTENTS](#)

Step 6

## What about BATTERIES?

*Digital cameras EAT UP REGULAR BATTERIES!*

**We strongly recommend that you purchase rechargeable batteries.**

The best type of battery you can buy for your digital camera is without a doubt **NiMH (Nickel Metal Hydride) batteries**.

**If you are going to be UNable to recharge your batteries for a while:**

Then you should consider buying **3-volt lithium** batteries. They have the longest life possible and will outlive any other battery, allowing you to go on long trips without having to recharge them.

**NOTE:** Make sure that your camera can use the type of batteries that you purchase. And remember, some cameras already come with a free set.

Feel free to browse through our [Digital Camera department](#) to view our entire product selection. Also, don't forget our [Digital Accessories department](#) and [Memory department](#).

[previous](#)