

Tuesday 29 March 2022

Amateur Photographer

Passionate about photography since 1884

Top 23 used deals
Buying or selling? We name the UK's
most popular second-hand cameras

Best used deals

Our pick of the **top second-hand buys**,
and tips on bagging a bargain

Used full-frame mirrorless

Go **full frame** for less:
we pick the best options



Build a great system for £1k

Budget camera set-ups
to cover every genre

Best digital compacts

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Dave Butcher Black & white film photography advice from 'Darkroom Dave'



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With long waiting lists for the latest new kit due to the global chip shortage, and the growing cost of living leaving us with emptier pockets, this year's second-hand special has never been more relevant. If you're hankering for a full-frame mirrorless body we offer our pick of the best options. If you're on a tighter budget we look at how to build a system for under £1,000, and if you

just want a high-quality compact to carry around we've got that covered too. But the second-hand market isn't just about buying. If you've got an item of kit you haven't used for months then perhaps you can live without it, and used retailers are crying out for it. Hopefully you'll be able to re-invest the money in some new kit, rather than having to pay the gas bill with it because, as Covid has taught us, in tough times our passions are more important to us than ever. **Nigel Atherton, Editor**

If you'd like to see your words or pictures published in *Amateur Photographer*, here's how:

SOMETHING TO SAY? Write to us at ap.ed@kelsey.co.uk with your letters, opinion columns (max 500 words) or article suggestions.

PICTURES Send us a link to your website or gallery, or attach a set of low-res sample images (up to a total of 5MB) to ap.ed@kelsey.co.uk.

JOIN US ONLINE Post your pictures into our Flickr, Facebook, Twitter or Instagram communities.

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This week's cover image

The cameras on this week's cover were photographed by Ian Pack

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This week in 1972

gettyimages

TREASURES FROM THE HULTON ARCHIVE



Mansion on the Move by Chris Ware

The Elizabethan manor house, Ballingdon Hall, moves slowly towards its new location in Sudbury, Suffolk, on a massive trailer. The owners moved the house uphill after industrial development and tree growth obscured their view of the River Stour Valley. The spectacle sparked such interest that onlookers were charged a

small fee, with the proceeds being donated to charity. Built in 1590 by Sir Thomas Eden, the house was moved half a mile all in one piece, lowered onto new foundations and its chimneys rebuilt. The owners lived in the house for more than 60 years before placing it up for sale in 2020 for the cool sum of £1.9m.

The Getty Images Hulton Archive is one of the world's great cultural resources. Tracing its origins to the founding of the London Stereoscopic Company in 1854, today it houses over 80 million images spanning the birth of photography to the digital age. Explore it at www.gettyimages.com.



It's good to share

Our favourite photos posted by readers on our social media channels this week

AP picture of the week

Fight & Flight

by David Jackson

Canon EOS R3, Canon EF 400mm f/4 DO IS II, 1/3200sec at f/4, ISO 8000

David tells us, 'This picture was taken from our kitchen door, which looks out onto the bird-feeders. Goldfinches arrive in numbers most days. They always put me in mind of bickering siblings, the way they bully each other off the feeders and spar in the air. No quarter is given! I've long wanted to capture this behaviour. The overcast weather actually helped, as it makes the beautiful colours of the birds "pop". In addition I made sure to locate the feeders so that I have a clean background to shoot against, which again helps to highlight the birds in the picture.' You can see more of David's work on his website at: www.aigantaighphotography.com

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The Runners By Paul Cronin

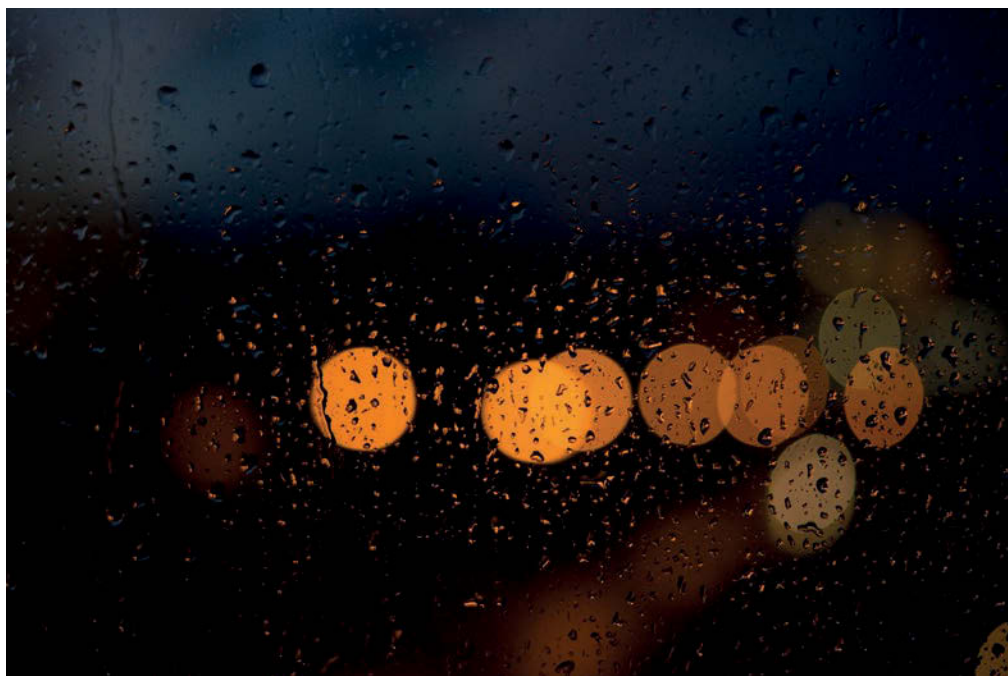
Canon EOS 5Ds, Canon 24-70mm f/2.8 at 70mm, 1/10sec at f/8, ISO 100

'It had been a foggy few days in London but being on early shifts I couldn't take advantage. Thankfully the forecast was for more fog during my late shift, so I took an early morning drive to the Windsor area. It's a great little spot with endless compositions in the right conditions,' says Paul. 'This morning I was waiting for some human element as I had seen a few runners and cyclists whilst out walking so decided to wait by the side of the road with the curve in the road leading past the small copse of trees. I set my camera to mono and with live view which I find easier to check what's happening alongside my histogram. I didn't need to use any filters or polarisers as the histogram was even from the dark to light helped by the thick fog.' Instagram: @paul.cronin.photography Website: www.paulcroninphotography.co.uk

Window Lights By Tony Tooth

Nikon D600, Nikkor 50mm f/1.8 G, 1/250sec at f/2, ISO 1000

Tony is retired and lives in Leek, Staffordshire Moorlands. He says, 'I took this picture as one of several of the very rainy street outside my apartment just after dark, including the various distortions of the raindrops on the window.' Tony enjoys taking photographs of landscapes, churches, canal scenes and abstracts.





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Laowa 25mm f/0.95 for Micro Four Thirds

 VENUS Optics has released its Laowa Argus 25mm f/0.95 MFT APO lens for Micro Four Thirds cameras, which offers a 50mm (35mm equivalent) coverage angle.

The new 25mm has inherited the fast f/0.95 maximum aperture, optical performance, internal focusing and low focus breathing seen in existing Argus lenses in Sony E/FE, Nikon Z, Canon RF and Fujifilm X mounts.

A 300° focus throw has been introduced to allow more precise focusing. The Laowa Argus 25mm f/0.95 MFT APO lens weighs 570g, is 86mm long and has a diameter of 71mm. It accepts 62mm diameter filters and has a minimum focus of 25cm. It can be pre-ordered now for £399.

Zoner Photo Studio X gets spring 2022 update

 ZONER Photo Studio X (ZPS X) photo software has had 'a hefty update' that's designed to let photographers have more customised control over their editing processes.


Among the updates are customised previews, customised thumbnails, a redesigned browser, new blending effects, a more efficient Preview cache, faster Catalog, Fast Preview 1:1 (which lets you see whether the preview has the same resolution as the original photo) and Fisheye Lens correction.

ZPS X photo software is a fully featured raw converter, with photo editing with layers and masks, while the retouching brush and faces tool are useful for enhancing portraits. You can download a free 30-day trial of ZPS X at www.zoner.com.

The packaging for Zoner Photo Studio X



Sony reveals its new FE PZ 16-35mm F4 G powerzoom

 SONY has unveiled a new wideangle zoom for its full-frame mirrorless cameras, the FE PZ 16-35mm F4 G. This revisits the territory occupied by the existing Zeiss-badged FE 16-35mm F4 ZA OSS that appeared in 2014, but has a very different design philosophy.

In a move that's designed to appeal to

videographers, it employs a powered, rather than mechanical zoom mechanism, driven by two silent XD linear motors. It's also very lightweight, at 353g (vs 518g), but it lacks optical stabilisation.

Sony has employed a 13-element, 12-group formula with plenty of special elements, including two advanced aspherical elements that suppress field curvature and astigmatism, and one each made from

extra-low-dispersion (ED) glass and super-ED glass to minimise chromatic aberration. The dust- and moisture-resistant barrel measures 88.1mm in length and 80.6mm in diameter, with a 72mm filter thread. The minimum focus distance ranges from 28cm to 24cm.


In contrast to its predecessor's minimalist design, the FE PZ 16-35mm F4 G sports a full array of external controls. Along with conventional focus and zoom rings, there's a video-friendly zoom lever on the side. Sony has also included an aperture ring that can be switched between clicked and clickless operation, an AF/MF switch, and an AF-stop button.

The Sony FE PZ 16-35mm F4 G is due in the shops in May for £1,300. This is £150 more than the street price of the older lens, which Sony says will remain in its range.



Sony's new 16-35mm f/4 powerzoom

DxO launches PureRAW 2 program

 DXO HAS released a major update to its PureRAW program for pre-processing raw files using the firm's advanced noise reduction and lens correction algorithms.

PureRAW creates 16-bit linear DNG files that can in turn be processed in other imaging software, such as Adobe Lightroom or Camera Raw, just like the original camera raw files.

DxO PureRAW 2 promises up to 4x faster processing on M1-based Macs when using PRIME or DeepPRIME noise reduction.

It now offers full support for Fujifilm X-series cameras with X-Trans CMOS sensors. DxO's Fujifilm support initially appeared in beta form in PhotoLab 5 last year, but PureRAW 2 now offers full support for 26 cameras and over 2,000 body/lens combinations.

Other updates include batch processing direct from Windows desktop or Mac Finder



PureRAW 2 is £115 for new users

windows. Lightroom users can now send raw files to PureRAW 2 for processing from within the program and Windows HiDPI display support is provided.

PureRAW 2 is available from www.dxo.com – it costs £115 for new users or £69 to upgrade. You can also use a 30-day free trial.

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Photo Ken Hubbard: 150-500mm | 500mm | F/6.3 | 1/2500 | ISO 800

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Nikon D850 Body	9+ Like New	£1,994
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Sony FE 70-200mm f2.8 G Master Lens	9+ Like New	£1,616


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Joy is the theme for
EISA Photography
Maestro 2022



Entries invited for EISA Maestro Contest 2022

 ENTRIES are being invited to the International EISA Photography Maestro Contest 2022 and entrants should provide five to eight photos on the theme of 'Joy'.

All entries must be in digital format, but don't have to be taken on a digital camera – they can be scanned film originals. But they must be taken for the purposes of this competition.

All UK entries must be received by 1 May. AP is running this EISA contest in conjunction with Photocrowd, so to enter your portfolio of images, go to photocrowd.com/maestrouk.

AP will choose the top three portfolios and these will all be showcased in AP. The winner will receive a one-year digital subscription to AP and will also go


forward to the International round.

The winning entries from each of the 16 participating EISA countries will be judged in June. The final results of the International Maestro contest will be revealed at the EISA Awards Gala on 2 September or, if circumstances are less favourable, online alongside the EISA Product Awards on 15 August.

The overall winner gets €1,500 and an EISA Maestro Trophy, second place receives €1,000 and a trophy and third place €750 and a trophy. For further details visit www.eisa.eu/maestro.

All of the National Maestro winners will also be published on Facebook at the end of June for the EISA Public's Choice competition, and the winner will scoop a €1,000 cash prize.

RPS opens call for images for IPE 164

 THE ROYAL Photographic Society (RPS) has announced the 2022 call for entries for the 164th edition of the International Photography Exhibition (IPE 164). The open call welcomes submissions from new, emerging, and established photographers of all ages, working in any subject or genre.

New approaches, alternative photo processes and experimental work is encouraged. A £4,000 prize fund will be awarded to standout entrants, including the IPE Award, Under 30s Award and a £1,250 commission to create new work. Then 100 chosen images will form an exhibition at the RPS in Bristol, in January 2023.

Entry is free for one image, and up to four images can be submitted for

£18-£30, as a series or as individual images. Entries close at 23:59 BST on 17 May. Images submitted before 1 April will be entered into an early-bird prize draw to win a signed copy of Ioanna Sakellarakis's photo-book *The Truth is in the Soil*. To enter, visit www.rps.org.



Liz Hingley's image from the IPE163

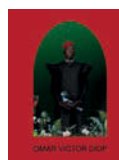
Books

The latest and best books from the world of photography



Omar Victor Diop

With essays by Renee Mussai, Imani Perry and Marvin Adoul. £40, Five Continents Editions, Hardback, 96 pages, ISBN: 9788874399932



Bringing together three projects, this self-titled monograph from art photographer Omar Victor Diop is a beautiful and important piece of work. With his vivid and vibrant studio photography, Diop's conceptual work concentrates on beautifully costumed portraits and self-portraits. Through this he focuses on important historical figures and events from black history and the African diaspora.

In this book there's the projects *Diaspora* (2014), *Liberty* (2017) and *Allegory* (2021), in which he revisits black African history in sets of beautifully crafted and poignant photographs that bring together ideas from the past and present. In addition, to contextualise the photographs, there are essays and an interview with Diop.

This is a beautifully presented book, and these are exquisite and unusual portraits. If you have an interest in social political history, that's a bonus too.

150 Facts About Colors by Joanna Zoelzer

£24.95, teNeues, hardback, 224 pages, ISBN: 9783961713653



Although not strictly a photography book as such, Joanna Zoelzer's interesting book is useful for photographers as a reference book. In it, we learn the meanings and history behind certain colours, which you might want to consider when creating your own photographic compositions. There are 150 stories to explore which discuss our experience, understanding and theories of colour, such as 'has pink always been feminine?', 'why are we green with envy?' and 'which colour is the most expensive?'

By using insight from art, nature, psychology and science, you'll learn more about every colour, giving you something to think about in your own work.

Readers' used. bargains

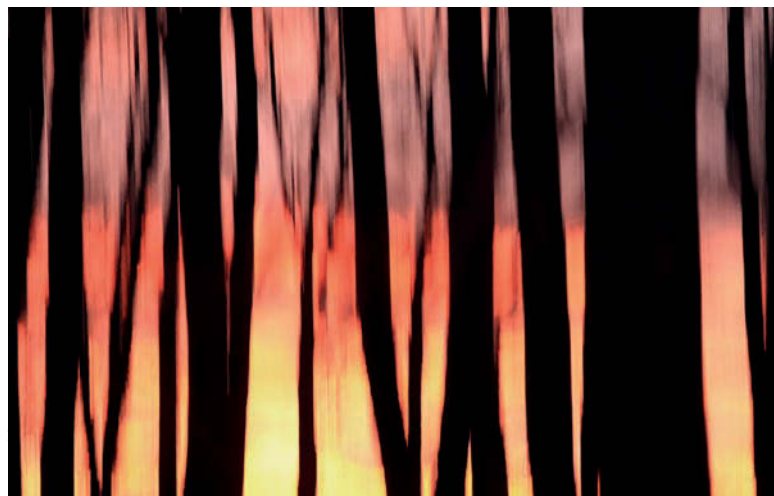
We asked you to tell us about your experiences buying used kit, and you responded in droves. Here's a selection of what you bought, where you bought it from, and why

Liz Hammond

USED KIT Canon EOS 90D; Canon EF 70-200 f4L IS USM

BOUGHT FROM London Camera Exchange, Facebook Marketplace

'I avoided buying used kit for years,' admits Liz, 'but since making my first purchase in 2019 I've been making up for lost time. There seems to be a very short delay between a camera being released and models appearing on the second-hand market.' Liz bought her EOS 90D and a 70-200mm lens from her local branch of LCE but has bought a range of other used kit in private sales from places like Facebook marketplace, including vintage lenses, analogue cameras and her 17-55mm lens. 'For me, the trick to buying from places like Facebook is knowing where your tolerance price is. If it turns out faulty, at what price would it hurt but you could swallow it? But if you want the reassurance of a guarantee, and technical checks on the kit, then you need to stick to a reputable second-hand retailer. Either way, there is a lot to be said about how great and green going second-hand is.'



Denise took this lovely wedding shot with her used Canon 24-105mm f/4L IS USM



Denise Maxwell

www.lensi.co.uk

USED KIT Sigma 35mm f/1.4 Art lens; Canon 24-105mm f/4 L; Canon 70-200mm f/2.8; Canon EOS M3; DJI Mavic zoom; Canon EOS 80D (for my god-daughter); Sony ZV1 (for my husband)

BOUGHT FROM MPB



When Denise became a victim of NHS austerity cuts she wondered if she could make a living doing the thing she was most passionate about – photography. Short version: she could, and she did, and 11 years later she's still going strong, shooting everything from weddings and portraits to news and sports, based in the West Midlands.

'My jobs are very diverse,' she explains, 'and I thrive on that. If you shoot the same thing all the time you can go into a kind of auto mode but I love that I'm still being tested, it keeps me on my toes. There's not many things I could be asked to shoot that I would not be comfortable doing.'

Denise has an extensive collection of kit, most of which she bought used. 'When I was a newbie all my kit was bought new, I thought that's the way it had to be,' she confesses. 'But then I bought something from MPB and the quality was just so good. You could just see that the person who owned it had hardly used it. I thought why am I buying new when I can get stuff that good second-hand? So I have continued to do that.'

Denise generally buys her camera bodies new – her main cameras are two Canon EOS 5D Mark IVs, with a 5D Mark III as a back-up – but her lenses second-hand.

'Most of us will upgrade our cameras every three to five years, but lenses will last decades.

I know people who are using 20-year-old lenses. So I think I have a bit more confidence in buying a used lens.'

One of her favourite purchases is her Sigma 35mm f/1.4 Art lens. 'I use it at events, for product photography, for food photography, newborn portraits... so a wide range of things because I cover so many different subjects. But the lens that doesn't leave my side is my 70-200mm. There is literally not a job that I do that I don't bring that. It's the lens I feel most comfortable with. If something's not going right, I can pick up that lens and suddenly everything is alright again.'

After her first experience with MPB Denise has stuck with them for most of her used purchases. 'I like that they give you the choice of what quality of used kit you want, with a sliding price scale depending on how new it is. I really like the values of the organisation as well, and I like how diverse their workforce is. That's something that matters to me, so it makes me happier to want to spend my money with them.'

In addition to her pro lenses Denise bought a Canon EOS M3 from them as a carry-around camera, and recently bought her first drone, a DJI Mavic Zoom, but the kit doesn't just travel in one direction – when it came to selling a couple of EOS 7Ds she no longer used, she knew exactly where to take them.



Klare Cosens

@sussex.wildlife

USED KIT Canon SX430 IS; Canon EOS 550D; Canon EOS 80D; Canon EF-S 18-55mm; Tamron 70-300mm; Sigma 24-300mm; Canon 100-400mm; Canon 2x converter Mark III

BOUGHT FROM Various

Klare is based in West Sussex and enjoys photographing her twin interests of mountain bike racing and wildlife in the South Downs National Park, which is on her doorstep. All of the gear I have is pre-loved,' says Klare. 'I've bought from various places including privately, CeX and Cash Converters. I like to reduce my footprint and do my part for the environment by using what's already been put into production. The price is obviously a draw too, as new kit is often out of my reach. The downside is that it can sometimes be a bit of a gamble but I tend to stick with reputable shops and most places these days are pretty good with describing the condition.'

'The most expensive thing I have bought is my Canon EOS 80D body, which I got from Cash Converters. It was only about two months old and in perfect condition, and I still use it now, years later. I absolutely love this camera – it does me proud for my sports and wildlife photography.'



Philippa Huber

USED KIT Nikon D750; Nikon 70-210mm f/4-5.6; Nikon 50mm f/1.4; Nikon 24-120mm f/3.5-5.6; Lensbaby Velvet 85

BOUGHT FROM eBay, LCE, MPB



Philippa worked around the world on private yachts for 25 years and moved back to the UK in 2019. She now lives on a narrowboat exploring the canals and rivers around England and enjoying bird photography. 'I've never (touch wood) had a bad experience buying second-hand,' she says. 'I bought my D750 "as new" from a private seller on eBay after spontaneously booking a trip to Lake Kerkini to shoot Dalmatian pelicans and wanting something better than my D90. I was nervous about buying on eBay but thankfully it was a great deal and a great camera. I then needed a couple of FX lenses to go with it and the staff at LCE Exeter were very helpful in setting me up with the 50mm and 24-120mm.

'My amazing 70-210mm lens lost autofocus while I was in the Caribbean last month (it's decades old and has been well used) but still works brilliantly in MF. I found a replacement just this morning on MPB and bagged it for a bargain £64. I'll have it tomorrow which is phenomenal service. I got the pelicans in flight shot with this lens (commended in BPOTY 2021). It doesn't have eye tracking or stabilisation or anything "modern", but the glass and build quality is amazing and I get great satisfaction from using my skills to get great shots with it. I bought my Lowepro Flipside 400AW backpack from MPB too, and a Lensbaby Velvet 85 – it's an intriguing lens. MPB is brilliant – I trust the quality and their reputation to sell at a competitive price with a guarantee.

Philippa Huber took this stunning shot on an old 70-210mm lens



Liz Mitchell

lizmitchellphotography.com

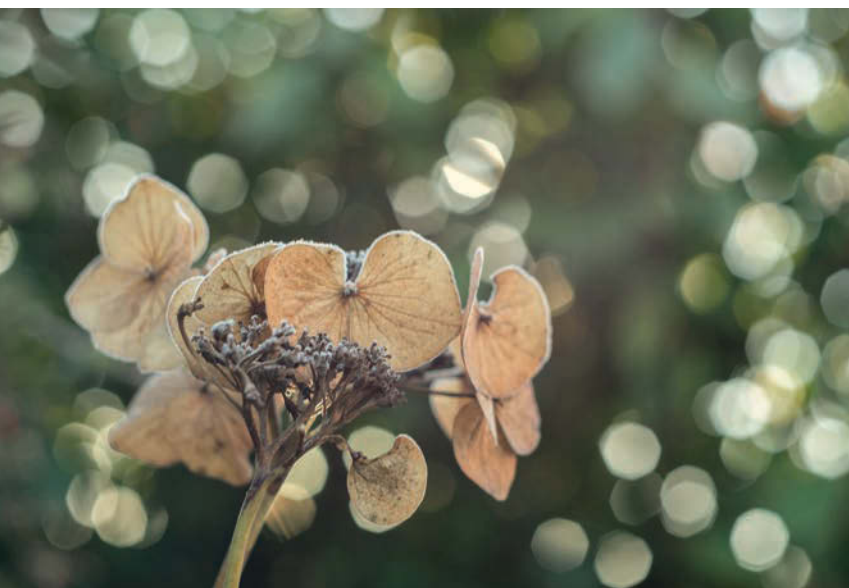
USED KIT Canon EOS 77D; Fujifilm X-E3

BOUGHT FROM Park Cameras, LCE, MPB, Fujifilm online shop

Liz lives in Cheshire and specialises mostly in landscapes and travel photography, which she supplies to stock libraries including Getty Images and Alamy. 'Most of my cameras and lenses have been bought as second-hand or reconditioned,' she tells us. 'I started with a used Canon EOS 400D bought from Park Cameras with a used Canon EF-S 18-135mm IS STM lens from London Camera Exchange (LCE) Derby. I gave the camera to my son but am still using the lens – it's a great all-rounder. I then upgraded to a 550D (also from LCE in Derby) which I traded in last year at MPB for my current camera, a Canon EOS 77D. I wanted a better sensor and considered the full-frame EOS 6D but I wouldn't have been able to still use my EF-S 18-135mm lens.

'In September 2019 I also bought a refurbished Fujifilm X-E3 kit with the XF 18-55 lens from the Fujifilm Shop. I wanted a lighter weight setup for a walking holiday in Italy. When this arrived it looked just like a brand new camera, apart from the box. I added to this kit in June 2020 with a used Fujifilm XC 50-230mm II OIS lens from MPB so that I could have a greater zoom capability. Although it's a "cheaper" XC lens rather than an XF lens I am still very pleased with the results – the only slightly annoying thing is that there is no dedicated aperture ring. In November last year, I managed to find a vintage Zenit TTL 35mm camera with a Helios 44M lens for £15 in a charity shop. The camera was listed as faulty but I really only wanted the lens. I bought an adapter so I can use it on the Fujifilm body and I am really pleased with the lovely swirly bokeh with this combination.

'I've been really happy with all my used purchases. I have found that LCE, Park Cameras and MPB are all really good retailers to deal with – they describe the condition of their used equipment accurately and the prices are fair, both for buying and selling.'





John Cuthbert

johndcuthbert.wixsite.com

USED KIT Sony A65; Sony A77; Sony A77II; Sony A99; Sony A7R II

BOUGHT FROM eBay

'I would say that most of our photography kit over the years has been purchased used, mainly from eBay, and has been for over 15 years now,' says John, who is based in Stirling, Scotland. 'The simple reason being that it represents great value for money and it is covered by a good money-back guarantee if and when things go pear-shaped, as they do from time to time. As well as cameras I have purchased lenses from Zeiss, Sigma and Tamron; Manfrotto tripods and bags, SD cards, backdrops, reflectors, a Canon pro printer, computers, monitors... the list goes on. Both my L.R.P.S and A.R.P.S were awarded with images taken using second-hand equipment. 'I can honestly say I've had very few issues with any, apart from a lens advertised with the wrong mount by mistake.. It was returned and I was given an instant refund.'



Scott Hills

[@caledonia84](https://twitter.com/caledonia84)

USED KIT Fujifilm X100T

BOUGHT FROM Wex online store

'Over the past ten years or so I've bought a lot of used camera equipment, both because of cost and my love of adapting old analogue lenses to modern digital cameras,' says Scott, who is a firefighter based in Glasgow, and a regular user of the AP Forum.

'But the best second-hand purchase I ever made was my little Fujifilm X100T. I had been suffering from anxiety and depression after the birth of my first daughter and had lost interest in most things but specifically photography. I didn't pick up my camera properly for at least a year. My therapist suggested I force myself to take my camera out, so to make things easier on myself I bought the X100T due to its great image quality but also the fact it was very small and I could fit it in a jacket pocket. It fully rekindled my passion for photography and partly helped with my recovery. Despite having full frame, APS-C Bridge and 35mm cameras all over the house, this is the one camera I wouldn't be without.'





Michaela Simpson

@michaelasimpsonphotos

USED KIT Sony A7R II; Sony 70-200mm f4 G OSS; Olympus OM-1

BOUGHT FROM Wex Photo Video, Ffordes

After a decade working as a commercial photographer Michaela, who is based in Tyneside, now concentrates solely on her portraiture and fine art work using both film and digital kit. 'I chose the Sony A7R II because it offered the best performance to cost ratio available at the time,' she says. 'Paired with high-quality lenses, mainly Sigma Art and Sony G, I'm delighted with its output. I prefer the F4 version of the 70-200mm to the F2.8 simply because of the weight advantage.' Michaela bought the camera at Wex Photo Video. 'I find the staff helpful, the used equipment well described, and the turnaround times speedy. They've recently opened a store in Newcastle which has been incredibly useful.' When it comes to film she favours an Olympus OM-1 that she bought from Ffordes. 'Ffordes is an old favourite of mine, and it's always good to deal with a long-established business. The great thing about both Wex and Ffordes is their guarantees, which give you peace of mind when buying second-hand.'



One of Ruby's product photos, taken using her used Nikon 105mm Macro



Rachel Mullett

pembrokeshiremoments.co.uk

USED KIT Canon EOS 5D Mark IV

BOUGHT FROM Carmarthen Cameras

Rachel Mullett is a Pembrokeshire born and based photographer who runs Skomer Island Photography Workshops and a photo gift company. 'I spend a lot of time on Skomer Island each year photographing the breeding puffins,' she tells us, 'and was using a Canon 5D Mark III. I always try to upgrade my kit when new models come out and I'm not sniffy about second-hand as long as they have been well looked after, have a low shutter count and suit my needs. The Canon 5D Mark IV was on my wish list because it had a better burst rate and tracking for my puffin photography and improved low light capability. It's proved to be a versatile camera. I bought it second-hand from Carmarthen Cameras who I have always found to be very helpful. My current wish list includes the Canon R5 and RF 100-500 lens – it's good to have something to work towards!'

Ruby LDN

www.rubylDN.uk

USED KIT Nikon 20mm f/2.8; Nikon 50mm f/1.4; Nikon 85mm f/1.8; Nikon 105mm f/2.8; Nikon 24-70mm f/2.8; Nikon 70-200mm f/2.8

BOUGHT FROM eBay and Wex Photo Video

As a working pro based in London Ruby's subjects encompass portraits, fashion and live events but her favourite type of work is product photography. 'It's just me and the product, and doesn't involve anybody else,' she says. 'It's a slower process and you can be more creative.' Her kit journey began with a Nikon D5000 and she has stayed with Nikon. She currently uses a D750 but recently added a new mirrorless Z 6 II body to her arsenal. 'I prefer to buy my bodies new,' she admits. 'There's more to go wrong with a camera and you don't want drama when you're shooting an event.'

Ruby's first foray into mirrorless has been



largely positive. 'I went for the Z 6II over the Z 7II because it's better in low light and I shoot music photography,' she explains. 'I love that it's so light to carry because I've shot so many London Fashion Weeks with DSLRs and the shoulder pain, from carrying it around! And I love the EVF. When you're in a fast-paced environment and you're trying to get the settings right, you can see what's happening right there and then, rather than click check, click check. It saves a massive amount of time.'

Ruby uses her Z 6II with her F mount Nikkors, via the FTZ adaptor. 'It works okay but it's a bit slow. You can really tell now that my lenses are quite old,' she laughs, acknowledging she needs to upgrade. Her first Z mount lens will be the Z 70-200mm.

Ruby's lens collection started with her 50mm, before adding the 85mm. 'When I started shooting London Fashion Week I got the 70-200mm, and then I realised I needed a 24-70mm too. Then I added the 105mm Macro for product photography, which I also use for headshots. All of my lenses were bought on eBay except for the 24-70mm, which came from Wex.'

'I have been lucky enough to have a really good experience on eBay, up to now,' she says. 'Everyone that I've bought from has been honest. But I'm careful. I always check the seller's feedback. I have a rule that if a seller has more than six negative feedbacks then I won't use them. Not just for lenses but with everything. I just can't be bothered with the drama. It's such a hassle trying to get your money back, and trying to get proof, and all this battling backwards and forwards. And I make sure that they're based in the UK.'

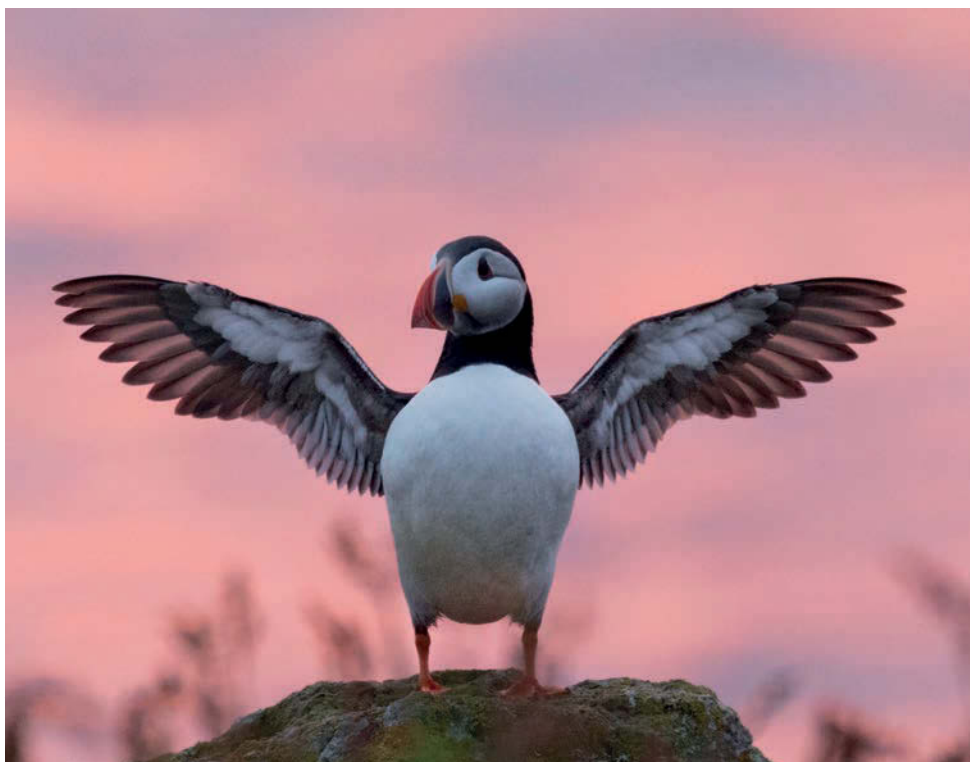


Sarah Jones

USED KIT Canon EOS 5D Mark III; Canon 70-200mm f/2.8; Canon 50mm f/1.8; Canon 17-40mm f/4

BOUGHT FROM Carmarthen Cameras

Sarah is a dog photographer who bought her entire Canon kit second-hand, and from the same retailer. 'Buying used makes sense because it enables me to buy a higher spec kit for my budget than I would otherwise,' she points out. 'Carmarthen Cameras have incredibly friendly and helpful staff, and they're also relatively local to me; it's an added bonus to support independent local businesses. When I plan my next upgrade, I'll be going back to them, and will more than likely be going second-hand again.'



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51 issues of Amateur Photographer are published per annum.
UK annual subscription price: £152.49
Europe annual subscription price: €199
USA annual subscription price: \$199
Rest of World annual subscription price: £225
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Distribution in Great Britain
Marketforce (UK) Ltd, 121-141 Westbourne Terrace, London W2 6JR
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Distribution in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland
Newsread, Telephone +353 23 886 3850

Printed by Precision Colour Printing
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LETTER OF THE WEEK

Present in the moment

Thank you for your articles on mindful photography and mental health. I've had my issues with depression and I really identified with what Tracey Calder described as the 'monkey mind' that constantly chips away at your self-confidence and belief. I wanted to relate my experience.

Last year I set myself the goal of documenting the streets of Blackpool through day trips during the high and low seasons. I planned all the what's and where's, and yet, when I got there, I struggled to tune in and find the rhythm of the place. All the time I was berating myself for not living up to my own expectations, that other people have done it better, and that I'd wasted my time and I should just give up and go home...

My feet were sore after a morning of walking so I sat on the beachfront and took my shoes off. Despite the warm summer air, the breeze blowing in off the sea was gently cooling. I could hear children laughing, carnival music drifting across from the pier and donkeys braying on the beach. I could smell the sunblock being slathered on by a lady nearby and the vinegary tang of hot chips was making me hungry. The tide was far

out, beyond the end of the North Pier, and seeing the distant waves crashing in I realised I really wanted to go for a paddle in the sea, just like I used to do as a child.


I picked up my shoes and wandered slowly across the cool wet sand, enjoying the feeling of every step. As I drifted towards the water all the human noises faded away, and all I could hear was the rolling of the waves and the cries of gulls. Then the joyously sharp coolness of the sea flooded over my feet and all the negativity and pressures I'd been piling on myself just washed away.

Sometimes we put so much pressure on ourselves to do that and do this, that we forget to just be present in the moment. I love the sea and being there, paddling, filled me with such a simple potent joy. It really centred me. I took some of my favourite photos from that day, of people playing in the sea.

And for the rest of the day I had a wonderful time, I relaxed and just enjoyed whatever came my way. That afternoon I took some of my best photos of 2021.

Thank goodness for paddling!
Jay Mason-Burns

Win! SAMSUNG
The Samsung 64GB EVO Plus microSDXC memory card with SD adapter offers fast U1, Class 10 rated transfer speeds of up to 130MB/s, offers 6x Multi Proof protection and a Limited 10-year warranty. www.samsung.co.uk/memory-storage/



Viewpoint: a response

Peter Kay may be surprised to know that I was very pleased to see his letter to *Inbox* (1 February) disagreeing with my Viewpoint (30 October) because, for me, the whole point is to

invite discussion, whether agreeing with or challenging my view. In this case, I hope it was clear in my viewpoint that I wouldn't 'dishonestly' submit the image that I used to illustrate my article in a competition,

and would not condone the use of 'doctored' images in documentary or news reporting. The question is where one draws the line. Peter suggests that contests won by people skilled in software are taking away

from the craft of photography. He may be right. Some would even go as far as to say that the 'craft' is what comes out of the camera without modification. I judge an image by whether I'd put it on my wall at home or whether it stirs up some emotion in me.

John Vahgatsi

Hand-held starlight

I read your articles on low-light photography with interest (AP 15 February). I take a lot of night shots with my Olympus cameras using the excellent 'Handheld Starlight' mode which Olympus cameras have. It takes a number of photos when the shutter button is pressed, then blends them into one good image automatically. This obviates the need to lug a tripod around and I've found the results are just as good as using one. This setting is great for unobtrusive street photography after dark. It's also good for aerial firework bursts.

David Austin

Showing its age

Like some of your other contributors I avoid eBay, finding it, amongst other things, cluttered and its look and feel showing its age. I have bought and sold with MPB and have found the firm excellent – great service and fair prices. On one sale they even upgraded my condition report from 'very good' to 'excellent', paying more accordingly. I thoroughly recommend them. For me they're the acceptable face of used/second-hand/pre-loved/pre-enjoyed/new to you!

Stuart Neville

My first digital

My first experience of digital photography came in the form of a Sony Mavica MVC-FD5, which



Olympus offers a 'Handheld Starlight' mode for low-light shots without a tripod



saved its c.130kb images to inserted 3.5in floppy discs. This was back in 1997/8 when working on the then Railtrack 'Station Regeneration Programme' across Greater Manchester, Cheshire and Merseyside. It was a game-changer for me. I could visit stations, take photographs of problems discovered, and be in a position to email images to the project team that day. From memory each disc held 10 photographs (and of course could be reformatted for reuse). I remember not trusting it the first time I took it out (what magic is this?!) but soon came to see digital photography as the future. At the time, my own camera was a Praktica B100 SLR with fixed 28mm, 50mm and 135mm lenses, which I had owned since the early 1980s. My current camera is the Olympus OM-D E-M10 Mark IV with 14-42mm pancake and 40-150mm lenses, but reading Allan's letter in the 8 February edition brought back fond memories both of my first venture into digital photography and

the great team I worked with on that project.

Mark Pearson

First DSLR

You asked for readers' early experiences in digital photography and also images that did not come out as intended. After 30 years using SLRs, I bought my first DSLR, a Nikon D70, in 2004. Its first outing was to the RAC Rally for historic rally cars and I was quite puzzled by the results. There were areas on the cars which were in focus and others that were blurred. The blurring wasn't consistent with poor panning. I discussed the results with other photographers but they hadn't experienced the problem. It was years

later when an article in AP by Professor Bob Newman on image stabilisation introduced me to rotational camera movement and the key part of the answer to my puzzle. The shutter speed was 1/50 at f/4.5, so low light and depth of field may have contributed.

David Scatchard

Suffolk guide

Thanks for publishing the letter from Ron Baber about Gill Moon's excellent website (AP 25 January). I am based in Suffolk and would have missed out on this had you not published it. I have just ordered a copy of her Suffolk guide book and await its arrival.

Matt McKenzie



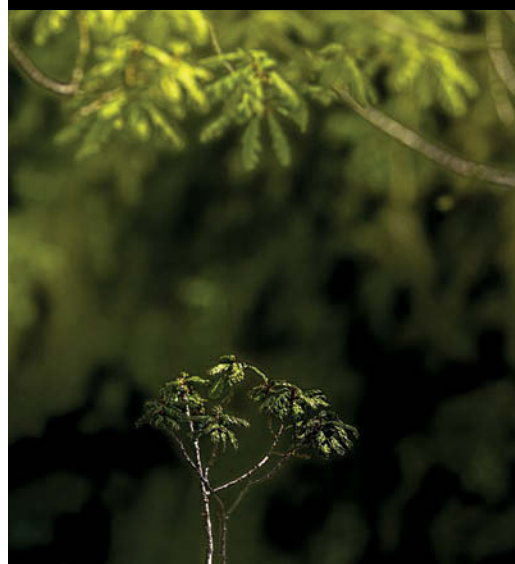
David Scatchard took this using his first digital camera

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In next week's issue



Spring stunners

Experts share techniques on the art and craft of intimate spring landscapes



Brake out

Find out more about photo-vans as photographers take to the road

Digital time travel

James Abbott shows how to replicate the look of daguerreotype portraits

Film stars

John Wade charts the rise and fall of the revolutionary disc cameras

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Reader Portfolio

Spotlight on readers' excellent images and how they captured them



What Did You Just Say?

1 I waited for this passer-by to reach the correct position, at which point he turned around as if someone had called out to him, unaware of the image of a near-naked woman in the poster.

Nikon 1 J2, 10mm, 1/400sec at f/2.8, ISO 200

They are NOT Antlers!

3 I saw this couple outside a café in Aosta, Italy, and repositioned myself so that it appeared as though the stacked chairs behind the woman were rather strange antlers. I converted the picture to monochrome as the red tablecloths were distracting.

Nikon D5200, 50mm, 1/1000sec at f/5.6, ISO 1250



Oliver Eade, Roxburghshire



About Oliver

Oliver is a retired doctor and writer of fiction. He became interested in

photography after

photographing his granddaughters who live abroad. He joined a camera club, subscribed to AP and completed the AP School of Photographic Imaging diploma course.

Favourite subjects

Street/documentary – it reveals so much about who and what we are.

What do you love about photography?

When taking photographs, I can forget myself and my worries and see how extraordinary our precious planet is.

First camera

Nikon D70.

Current kit

Nikon D5200 and a Sony compact.

Favourite lens

A versatile 18-200mm, frowned on by pros but so useful for street photos.

Favourite accessory

My wife's shoulder as a camera rest instead of a tripod.

Dream purchase

Sigma Nikon-fit 150-600mm telephoto

lens to photograph the moon.

What software do you use?

Photoshop.

Where do you find inspiration?

Prior to the pandemic I found inspiration in people; in the past two years I've found inspiration elsewhere in nature, focusing on close-ups, landscapes, and townscape.

Favourite photographers

Ansel Adams, who showed how important light and shade are; Henri Cartier-Bresson for his humanity; Tony Ray-Jones for his gentle humour; Vivian Maier for her insightful images; Elliott Erwitt for his quirkiness.

Favourite photo books

A Day Off by Tony Ray-Jones, *The Lives of Lee Miller* by Antony Penrose, and *South Southeast* by Steve McCurry.

Favourite tips

Forget the 'rules' of photography and just capture that moment which will never happen again. Also, look at other photographers' work. And remember that photography is a form of visual art, not just an exercise in technique.

Is there a story behind your photos?

The images are from travels round the world with my wife, who is Chinese, after our retiral, mostly visiting relatives.





SKYLUM
software

The **Reader Portfolio** winner chosen will receive a copy of **Skylum Luminar AI**, worth £79. See www.skylum.com

Luminar is a fully featured photo editor for Mac and PC designed for photographers of all skill levels, blending pro-level tools with remarkable ease of use and an enjoyable experience. A new Library feature lets you organise, find and rate images easily, while over 100 editing features, plus a suite of fast AI-powered technologies under the hood, will make any image stand out.



YOUR PICTURES IN PRINT

Submit your images

Please see the 'Pictures' section on page 3 for details of how to submit. You could see your photos here in a future issue!



The White House

2 What really caught my eye was the white house and its reflection, a tiny element of the whole picture.

Nikon Coolpix 5400, 58mm, 1/80sec at f/3.5, ISO 50

Statue of Liberty

4 The gentleman in the foreground was waving his arms about, and I waited until he raised his right arm, unintentionally mimicking the raised arm of the Statue of Liberty on the Hudson River behind him.

Nikon Coolpix 8800, 26mm, 1/200sec at f/7.4, ISO 50

Two Men and a Mule

5 Whilst walking in the Sierra Nevada with our daughter and Spanish son-in-law to get a good view of Mulhacén, Spain's highest mountain, these two men in agitated discussion caught my eye. Forty minutes later, on our way back, they were still talking away, their position unchanged.

Nikon D70, 30mm, 1/250sec at f/10, ISO 200





Dealers' best used offers

A range of dealers share some of their best buys, and buying advice, with **Geoff Harris**

While availability of the latest high-end mirrorless kit has improved of late, there are still ongoing supply chain problems affecting some new gear. So it's not surprising the used market remains buoyant. And as we saw with the feature on page 12, readers are bagging some great used deals which is making photography more affordable – as well as helping the planet. In the next few pages we asked some leading used dealers to share their current best buys and insights. Prices and availability are changing all the time but this should give you a better idea about some of the great deals coming through, particularly with older, but still very capable, DSLRs. All the retailers featured here sell carefully checked equipment, with a range of warranties. See their websites for details. NB: most camera bodies shown with lenses for illustrative purposes only.

MPB

www.mpb.com

Canon EOS 5D Mark IV body

Released in August 2016, the EOS 5D Mark IV has been a staple amongst pros. With the new Canon R cameras taking the market by storm, many photographers are trading their 5D IV's in to free up funds. The 5D Mark IV is now available at MPB's cheapest ever price but still has a huge amount to offer and is a great buy. From £1,399 in good condition.



Nikon D750 body

The full-frame Nikon DSLR market has been shaken up by the release of the Z 7 and Z 6. The D750, although a few years old now, still excels as a great multi-function DSLR. With a burst rate of up to 6.5fps, Full HD movie recording and a 24.3MP full-frame sensor, it's a great upgrade too. Prices start from £694, in good condition.



Canon EF 70-200mm f/2.8 L IS II USM

One of the best all-rounder lenses out there. Much like the 5D Mark IV, this has become much cheaper recently, as photographers look to move them on in favour of the recently

announced RF 70-200mm. The 70-200mm is still a real workhorse of a lens and is currently the cheapest it's ever been. From £809, in good condition.

Nikon AF-S 105mm f/2.8G IF-ED VR Micro

Arguably one of the best macro lenses out there, this offers a very sharp image with a magnification ratio of 1:1. The inbuilt VR (Vibration Reduction) provides sharper results if shooting handheld, which is ideal for photographing insects, small wildlife or for product photography. Value-for-money-wise, this is a must-have lens for most photographers. From £334 in good condition.

covered by our 'no hassle' six-month guarantee. From £749, excellent condition.



Park Cameras

www.parkcameras.com/used

Canon EOS RP and RF 24-105mm f/4-7.1 IS STM lens

This full-frame mirrorless camera kit combines the EOS RP with the versatile, compact 24-105mm f/4-7.1 IS lens with its powerful optical image stabiliser for 26.2MP images with the extra bonus of stabilisation. From £1,218 in good condition.

Sony A7 body

The full-frame 24.3MP mirrorless contender rivals leading DSLRs with outstanding detail, sensitivity and quality in a compact body, adding Full HD video and BIONZ X high-speed processing. From £459, in good condition. An ideal companion lens is the FE 28-60mm F/4-5.6 OSS, from £239.



Fujifilm X-T3 body

Comes with a high-resolution 26.1MP APS-C X-Trans BSI CMOS 4 sensor and lots of options for content creators who shoot stills and video – from £669.

A good companion lens is the XF 16-80mm F/4 R OIS WR, from £549. We also specialise in



buying and selling film cameras and have a huge range available on site.

Wex Photo Video

www.wexphotovideo.com/used/

Canon EF 100-400mm f/4.5-5.6L IS II USM lens

Get £100 off this used EF/EF-S mount telephoto zoom with code USEDAP100.* From 29 March to 10 April.



Sony FE 70-200mm f/2.8 G Master lens

A similar offer applies to this fast, versatile stabilised E-mount lens, again using the code USEDAP100.

* Voucher code cannot be used in conjunction with any other used promotions; available online and in-store. For terms and conditions, see bit.ly/wexoffer



Grays of Westminster

www.graysofwestminster.co.uk

Nikon D6 body

With Nikon mirrorless cameras stealing the limelight recently we have some excellent examples of second-hand DSLRs available, such as the formidable D6. This features a 20.8MP full-frame sensor, 14fps shooting with AF tracking and an ISO range that goes as far as 3,280,000. From £6,799 (good).



Nikon D850 body

Other highlights include the 45.7MP D850 for only £2,075 with a low shutter count, or alternatively, the D750 with under 3,000 shutter actuations for £895.

CameraWorld

www.cameraworld.co.uk

Canon EOS 100D and 18-55mm IS STM Lens

This is currently a great-value compact DSLR, featuring an 18MP APS-C sensor and a nine-point AF system. It weighs in at a compact 407g and is great value when matched with this lens. From £299. The Canon 55-250mm f/4-5.6 IS EFS lens is also selling from £119.

Canon EOS 6D body

Amazing-value full-frame DSLR with 21MP sensor delivering high-quality results at a budget price. We'd had models with shutter counts as low as 14k. From £499 (excellent condition). The 6D would be perfectly matched with the Canon 24-105mm f/4L IS USM EF, making a powerful but portable combo. From £499 in excellent condition.



Nikon Z 50 body

You can also make some big savings on used mirrorless cameras, a great example being the Nikon Z 50 with the 16-50mm Z DX zoom lens. Key features of this camera include a 20.9MP APS-C sensor, 11fps continuous shooting with AE/AF and tilting touchscreen. All our gear is checked and cleaned and is

Nikon Z 6 body

This can be found for as little as £832 and with its latest firmware, the AF performance is almost on a par with the Z 6II.



Nikon lenses

Recent great deals include the AF-S 85mm f/1.4G, in mint condition for only £1,035, the AF-S 300mm f/4E PF VR for only £1,430 and the AF-S 105mm f/2.8G VR Micro for £599. We also have a wide selection of autofocus zooms, 35mm bodies and manual lenses, all coming with a full 14-day money-back guarantee and a 12-month warranty.

Ffordes

www.fffordes.com

Nikon D300

This great beginners' camera can be picked up for as little as £149 used.



Nikon and Canon lenses

Typical prices for the Nikon 24-120mm f/4 AF-S VR are £379 and £1,199 for the Canon 100-400mm f/4.5-5.6 L IS II USM.

Panasonic G9 body and more...

We have this attractive 20.3MP mirrorless model with fast AF for under £550 in excellent condition. There is also the Pentax 645D body for £1,249. We are also offering the Leica M9 digital rangefinder body for £1,789 or the Leica M6 film body for £1,950. Even cheaper is the Olympus OM2 Spot, for a mere £159.



Clifton Cameras

www.cliftoncameras.co.uk/used-camera-equipment

When a new camera is released, we get an increase of stock on the previous models. At the moment we are getting a good steady flow of Sony A7 II and IIIs traded against the A7 IV and seeing more Nikon D850, D810 and D800 bodies traded in against the Z 9. These previous models are a great-value way to upgrade or get into full-frame DSLR and mirrorless systems.



London Camera Exchange

www.LCEgroup.co.uk

Nikon D600 body

Recently we've had this 24.3MP full-frame DSLR with fast and effective AF on sale for £429.99, in excellent condition with a shutter count of just 5.5k. The also very capable D750 full-frame DSLR has been going for £699.99 in excellent condition, with only 22k shutter activations.



Canon EOS 6D and BGE 13 Grip

Another very capable 20MP full-framer, offered in excellent condition with just 15k shutter activations and a battery grip for £549.99.

Sony A7 III body

With a shutter count of only 4.8k this excellent entry-level mirrorless full-framer with a 24MP sensor and powerful IS has been selling for £1,299.99 in mint condition and boxed.



Lenses

Used Nikon AF-S 14-24mm F2.8 – excellent condition and boxed for just £699.99.

Used Canon EF 100-400 L IS USM Mark II – mint/boxed for £1,499.99.

Mifsuds

www.mifsuds.com

Canon EOS 7D Mark II body

Selling for £499, along with the Canon EOS 5D Mark III body for £699. We've also been offering Canon's EF 70-200 f/2.8L IS II USM for £897.



Peter Loy

www.peterloy.com

Leica IIIg, 5cm f/2.8 Elmar lens, cap, case

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Leica M6 TTL 0.85 body

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Great used systems for under a grand

Buying second-hand means you can get yourself a tidy kit for popular genres for less than £1,000.

Angela Nicholson considers the options

There are few people who would argue that photography is a cheap pursuit, but if you're willing to forgo the excitement of breaking the seal on a factory-fresh box or peeling the film off the camera's screen, you can reduce its cost considerably by buying second-hand gear. And thanks to reputable dealers like CameraWorld, London Camera Exchange, MPB, Park Cameras, Ffordes and Wex Photo Video, etc, who are all happy to buy and sell used photographic kit, you don't have to get involved with bidding wars or purchase stuff from people who don't understand the

difference between mint condition and well-used gear (see page 24).

Instead, you can feel safe in the knowledge that you're dealing with people who understand photography and the gear that they are selling. Most retailers give any second-hand kit a thorough check upon receiving it and often clean it before it's sent out to a new owner. And, of course, if you buy from a retailer, the kit is covered by the Consumer Rights Act which means it must be as described and any faults mentioned. You also have the right to cancel your order and get a refund at any point up until

14 days from the day you receive your purchase. Many retailers also offer a warranty, so if the camera or lens develops a fault during the first few months that you have it, you're covered.

Over the next three pages, I'll outline some of the bargains available on the second-hand market for shooting landscape, astrophotography, portraits, sport, wildlife, travel or street photography. My budget is £1,000, but as you'll see there are some options that come in considerably lower than that. Also, all the prices quoted are for excellent or good condition items, but if you don't mind the odd superficial mark, you can save yourself more money by opting for 'well-used' condition examples.

One word of warning before you read on, once you start buying second-hand gear, it can get seriously addictive...

Landscape



Sony A7R (£615) and Tamron 20mm f/2.8 Di III OSD M1:2 (£250)

I still remember my amazement at the size of the Sony A7R when it was first unveiled in October 2013. Alongside the A7, it was the first full-frame mirrorless camera, and with dimensions of just 127x94x48mm, it seemed tiny compared to a full-frame DSLR camera.

A few years down the line, Sony is now on its fourth generation of the A7R series and there have been great developments made along the way, but the original Sony A7R remains a great option for landscape photography. I've already mentioned its size, but it also weighs just 465g with a battery, which means it's highly portable and you won't mind carrying it when you're covering long distances on foot. Then there's the 36.4MP full-frame sensor, which is capable of capturing plenty of detail so it



can out-resolve more modern cameras with lower pixel counts.

One of the key criticisms of the A7R is that its contrast detection autofocus system struggles in low light or if the subject has low contrast, so it's not a great choice of camera for sport photography, but a slow AF system isn't a problem for landscape images.

CIPA testing also indicates that the A7R's battery lasts for around 340 shots before needing recharging, which is rather low but Sony-FW50 batteries are still available new for £54.99, so you can afford to buy a spare or two.

Landscape photography generally calls for a wideangle lens – and at around £250 in excellent condition, the Tamron 20mm f/2.8 Di III OSD M1:2 makes a great choice. It's compact, optically excellent and weather-sealed yet weighs just 220g. An added bonus is that it can focus on subjects just 11cm from the sensor, delivering half-life-size reproduction.

If the Tamron 20mm f/2.8 Di III OSD M1:2 doesn't appeal, take a look at the Tamron 24mm f/2.8 Di III OSD M1:2 (£199), Samyang AF 18mm F2.8 FE (£289) and Samyang AF 24mm F2.8 FE (£194).

Astrophotography



Canon EOS 6D (£399) and Samyang 14mm f/2.4 XP (£599)

Since its launch in November 2012, the Canon EOS 6D has been one of the most popular cameras around for astrophotography. That's because its full-frame sensor and comparatively modest pixel count of 20.2million enables it to capture remarkably clean low-to-medium ISO-range images with excellent shadow detail that can withstand some brightening.

As it's a DSLR, the 6D has an optical viewfinder, but it can also operate in live view mode if you prefer to compose the image on screen – that can be helpful in dark conditions. One thing to bear in mind, however, is that there's no bulb-timer or intervalometer built in so you'll

have to invest in an external one such as the Hahnel Capture Timer Kit (£69 new).

The EOS 6D has Canon's EF mount which means that there's a huge range of lenses available for use on it. Astrophotography usually calls for a fast wideangle lens and one that caught my eye is the Samyang 14mm f/2.4 XP which can be found for around £599 second-hand in like new condition. It's a manual-focus optic, but there's a distance scale which makes focusing at infinity easy.

Because of the distance of the subject and the short focal length of the lens, there's plenty of depth of field, so you can shoot with the aperture wider open. The large maximum aperture also lets in plenty of light so you don't need to worry about needing to push the sensitivity up to very high levels and recording a lot of noise instead of stars.



'The EOS 6D has Canon's EF mount, so there's a huge range of lenses'

Portraits



Canon EOS 5D Mark III (£630) and Canon EF 85mm f/1.8 USM (£260)

Canon's EOS 5D series of full-frame DSLRs have been incredibly popular and the 5D Mark III is one the most widely-owned. Fortunately, it's now readily available on the second-hand market at very attractive prices. You can expect to pay around £630 for one in good condition yet it cost £2,999 at launch.

The 5D Mark III features a 22.3MP sensor and Digic 5+ processor, which together enable a native sensitivity range of ISO 100-25,600. In addition, there's a 61-point autofocus system with 41 cross-type points (5 of which are diagonally sensitive) and maximum continuous shooting rate of 6 frames per second. That's a nice combination for portrait photography because it means you can target your subject's eyes precisely and capture some movement if you wish to, rather having to opt for static poses.

A full-frame sensor gives plenty of scope to blur the background

of a portrait by using a larger aperture. Thanks to its flattering perspective and comfortable shooting distance, an 85mm lens is the classic focal length for portraiture. At around £260 in excellent condition, the Canon EF 85mm f/1.8 USM makes a great pairing with the 5D Mark III. It's a widely-respected optic that delivers excellent centre sharpness at wide apertures.



Sports and wildlife



Nikon D7200 (£439) and Nikon Nikkor AF-S 70-300mm f/4.5-5.6 G IF ED VR (£250)

A sub-full-frame camera makes an attractive choice for sport and wildlife photography because, as well as being smaller and more affordable than a full-framer, the focal length magnification factor makes any lens mounted on it seem longer.

Dating from March 2015, the Nikon D7200 has a 24.2MP APS-C format sensor with no anti-aliasing filter, enabling it to capture sharper images and fine detail. This chip is paired with Nikon's Expeed 4 processor and together they enable a maximum continuous shooting rate of 6fps for up to 100 JPEGs or 27 12-bit raw files. Yes, there are much faster shooting rates available these days but that also means that your memory card fills up quicker and you have more images to sift through, so for most sport and wildlife photography, 6fps is just fine. However, if you want to push a little bit higher, there's the option of the 1.3x

crop mode that enables you to shoot at 7fps.

Freezing action requires a fast shutter speed which may mean you need to push up the ISO setting in low light, so it's good to know that the D7200 has a native sensitivity range of ISO 100-25,600.

Further good news for sport and wildlife photographers is that the D7200 has an excellent 51-point AF system with 15 cross-type points. In addition, the central cross-type point is sensitive down to f/8.

As it has the Nikon F-mount, the D7200 is compatible with a huge range of lenses that are readily available on the second-hand market. At around £250 in excellent condition, the Nikkor AF-S 70-300mm f/4.5-5.6 G IF ED VR is a very attractive pairing that delivers an effective focal length range of 105-450mm, which is a great range for sport and wildlife.



Buy second hand with confidence

We offer a 6-month warranty on all second hand over £50



Travel



Olympus OM-D E-M5 Mark II (£230) and Olympus M.Zuiko Digital ED 12-200mm f/3.5-6.3 (£489) and Panasonic Lumix G 20mm f/1.7 ASPH II (£160)

The Olympus OM-D E-M5 Mark II is great for travel, as it's a small, light camera, yet robust and weather-sealed. It also has a collection of useful modes for tricky situations. Live Time, Live Bulb and Live Composite mode, for example, take the guesswork out of long exposures by allowing you to see the image build up in the viewfinder or on the screen on the back of the camera. There's also High Res Shot mode that sets the 16MP sensor to shift by a tiny amount between a series of 8 shots captured in succession. These are then composited in-camera to create a 40MP equivalent image.

As a Micro Four Thirds mirrorless camera, the E-M5

Mark II is compatible with a huge range of lenses from Olympus (OM System), Panasonic, Sigma and more, but our recommendation for travel photography is the Olympus M.Zuiko Digital ED 12-200mm f/3.5-6.3. This lens offers an effective focal length range of 24-400mm, making it phenomenally versatile for everything from interiors to landscapes and portraits to wildlife or distant details.

While the E-M5 Mark II has an excellent image stabilisation system built in, the Panasonic Lumix G 20mm f/1.7 ASPH II is also a great addition. Its f/1.7 maximum aperture makes it ideal for low-light shooting.



Street



Fujifilm X100F £769

Unlike the other cameras in this list, the Fujifilm X100F is a compact camera. However, it's not your average compact because it has an APS-C format sensor inside. In fact, it's the same 24.3MP X-Trans CMOS III sensor as is found in the Fujifilm X-T2 and X-Pro2. And around the front, there's the superb Fujinon 23mm f/2.0 lens, which with an effective focal length of 35mm, is ideal for street photography. Plus, the large maximum aperture means that you can get nice separation of your subject from its surroundings and you don't need to push the sensitivity (ISO) up too high if the light level drops a little.

In another nice touch, the X100F has a hybrid viewfinder which means that with a flick of a switch you can change from the optical viewfinder to a 0.48in 2,360k-dot electronic viewfinder.

This is joined by a 3in 1,040k-dot LCD monitor.

A total of 15 of Fujifilm's excellent Film simulation modes are on board, including Acros (with or without a red, green or yellow filter effect), which produces very attractive black & white results in-camera – which is perfect for traditional-looking street photography.

Thanks to its aperture ring and dials to set the shutter speed, ISO and exposure compensation, you can set up the X100F for shooting without even powering it up, and when you do switch it on, you'll find that its focusing system is nice and responsive. The Tracking AF and 8fps continuous shooting capability could prove useful when you want to follow someone's movement and capture the perfect composition.



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Classic compacts

If you're looking for a pocketable digital camera, then there are a range of great choices available on the second-hand market. **Joshua Waller** lets us know his top choices

Fujifilm X100T



At a glance

£340-400 used

- 16MP APS-C X-Trans CMOS sensor
- 35mm equivalent f/2 lens
- Hybrid optical/electronic viewfinder
- 3in LCD screen
- Wi-Fi

The Fujifilm X100 introduced in 2012 brought with it several things that people instantly



loved, including the classic look of film rangefinder cameras, a large optical viewfinder (with impressive hybrid electronic mode), manual controls and metal dials. With its large APS-C sensor, it's capable of giving DSLR-level quality whilst also fitting into a jacket pocket.

The first model was the 12MP X100 (2012), which was followed by the 16MP X100S (2013) and X100T (2014), with the X100V and X100F later. We'd recommend looking out for the X100T, which seems like the sweet spot in terms of pricing. It's available from around £339-£399, making it a real bargain. The analogue control dials make it a real joy to use, with impressive image quality on offer too.

Fujifilm cameras are famed for their attractive colour output

With fewer and fewer new compact cameras being released, we often have to look at the second-hand market to find the best value. Here we've been looking through some of the great compact cameras of the recent past, and potential future classics, that you should be looking at if you're in the market for a second-hand camera.

We've selected models that offer manual control, raw shooting support, plus additional advanced features, that make these great models to use

especially if you're looking to get the best out of these cameras. Some of these offer classic styling, as well as external control dials, making them much more pleasant to use than your standard compact camera.

You'll also find that buying from a UK retailer means you can often get a warranty to go with the used camera, whereas if buying from other second-hand marketplaces such as eBay or Facebook, it's unlikely you'll get any warranty.

Some of these models, despite their age, may also be available new, giving you the chance to buy one in mint condition.

Ricoh GR II



The Ricoh GR series is a range of compact models designed to hark back to the Ricoh GR 35mm film cameras. These were known for their compact size and snapshot features, making them great for street and travel. Now the original film model costs the same as the digital version!

With the Ricoh GR, Ricoh introduced an APS-C sensor in an impressively compact camera body. The second version, the GR II from 2015, is available for around £400 second-hand.

The lens combines a 28mm equivalent view with an f/2.8 aperture and delivers sharp, detailed images. With its wideangle view and snap focus option, the camera makes a great choice for street photography, and its compact size means you can take it everywhere you go. With manual controls, raw support, and plenty of customisation available, it's a great choice for the advanced photographer.

At a glance

£400 used

- 16MP APS-C sensor
- 28mm equivalent f/2.8 lens
- Viewfinder optional
- 3inch screen
- Wi-Fi and NFC



Small and discreet, the GR II is ideal for candid photography



Panasonic Lumix LX100

At a glance

£300 used

- 12.8MP Four Thirds sensor
- 24-75mm equivalent f/1.7-2.8 lens, OIS
- 2.7million-dot electronic viewfinder
- 3in screen
- 4K video

The Panasonic Lumix LX100 offers a fast zoom lens and Four Thirds sensor, along with optical image stabilisation. What makes this camera stand out from many of the other compact cameras is the level of external manual controls available, thanks to the inclusion of numerous switches and dials. You'll find you can adjust the aperture, shutter speed, exposure compensation, aspect ratio and AF option without even switching the camera on.

The lens offers a 24-75mm equivalent zoom range. Its f/1.7-2.8 aperture is considerably brighter than most other large-sensor cameras, which is all the more impressive considering that it's an optically stabilised zoom. Even though the camera is now getting on in years, it still offers built-in Wi-Fi for copying images to your phone, and can record 4K video. There's a fixed 3in screen, plus a good-sized built-in electronic viewfinder, with a high resolution of 2.7m-dots. The metal body and Leica lens give this camera a real premium feel.



With its Four Thirds sensor and fast zoom lens, the LX100 is great for low light



Sony Cyber-shot RX100 III

At a glance

£230-275 used **£469** new

- 20MP 1in BSI CMOS sensor
- 24-70mm equivalent f/1.8-2.8 lens
- 1.44million-dot Pop-up EVF
- 3in tilting screen
- Wi-Fi and NFC

The Sony Cyber-shot RX100 series introduced a new kind of compact camera, with a larger-than-normal 1in 20MP sensor, and a bright zoom lens. In true Sony style, the technology packed into each camera has been impressive. In the RX100 III model, Sony was able to add a pop-up electronic viewfinder with no noticeable size increase. There's also a bright zoom lens, with a useful 24-70mm equivalent range and an f/1.8-2.8 aperture.

For value for money this is a real bargain. Expect to pay another £100 for each newer version, so the Mark IV is around £350 and the Mark V around £435, all with the same lens. However, if you like easy-to-access external controls, then some may find the small buttons and controls on the RX100 series cameras quite fiddly. Another notable disadvantage of the size is the lack of a built-in grip, so you may want to look out for the optional grip that can be added to the camera. The RX100 III records FullHD video, and you'll need the Mark IV if you want 4K.



Highlights of the RX100 III include a large-aperture lens and pop-up viewfinder



Panasonic Lumix TZ100

At a glance

£250-300 used **£379** new

- 20MP 1in CMOS sensor
- 25-250mm equivalent f/2.8-5.9 lens
- 1.1million-dot electronic viewfinder
- 3in touchscreen
- 4K video

The Panasonic Lumix TZ100 features a 10x optical zoom lens, equivalent to 25-250mm, with an aperture range from f/2.8-5.9. This gives a really useful wideangle to telephoto range that allows you to tackle all manner of subjects.

The lens includes optical stabilisation to help with longer shots or for when you're shooting in low-light, while 5-axis hybrid optical/electronic stabilisation is available for shooting video. You'll find manual controls, as well as raw format recording available on the TZ100, and the Q.Menu button gives you quick access to settings.

It uses a 1in sensor, offers 4K video recording, and has Wi-Fi built-in. If you're looking for a compact camera that offers a long optical zoom lens but with the image quality of a larger sensor, whilst still fitting in your pocket, then this is a great choice. With a relatively compact body and a weight of just 312g with battery and memory card it is easy to take with you wherever you go, making it a great travel choice.



A long zoom lens, 1in sensor and built-in EVF make the TZ100 a great travel camera



Canon PowerShot G7 X Mark II

At a glance

£350 used

- 20MP 1in sensor
- 24-100mm equivalent f/1.8-2.8 lens
- 3in touchscreen
- FullHD video
- Wi-Fi

The reason you might want this over another compact is that it offers additional reach compared to most. Its 4.2x optical zoom lens offers a 24-100mm equivalent range and an f/1.8-2.8 aperture, and is paired with a 20MP 1in sensor. Yet it remains small enough to fit in a jacket pocket.

You also benefit from Canon's excellent colour reproduction, with great JPEGs straight from the camera. With logical controls and menus, along with a responsive touchscreen, this is a great point and shoot camera, but you also get manual controls and raw support. If you're used to shooting with Canon cameras, then this makes a great pocketable option.

However, for those that want to record 4K video, this is not a good choice, as it's limited to FullHD resolution only. The touchscreen can be tilted to help with viewing angles, as well as tilting up to face forwards, making it suitable for selfies.



A versatile zoom lens and plenty of manual controls make this a fine pocket camera



Panasonic Lumix FZ1000

At a glance

£400 used

- 20MP 1in CMOS sensor
- 25-400mm equivalent f/2.8-4 lens
- 2.36million-dot OLED EVF
- 3in tilting-screen
- 4K video recording

If you want a versatile zoom and a large sensor, then this is where you need to be looking, thanks to its 16x optical zoom lens, giving a 25 to 400mm equivalent range. Optical image stabilisation helps keep shots steady, and the camera can shoot at 12fps in continuous shooting mode, which still remains impressive even today. There's 4K video recording too.

A built-in, high-resolution electronic viewfinder makes the camera easier to use in sunny conditions. Alternatively you can use the 3in screen, which can be tilted out to an array of different angles.

The camera has an ergonomic design, with SLR-like styling, which helps make it more stable when using the camera and its long telephoto reach. It's a great option for those that want to capture wildlife, but don't want the additional weight of a DSLR or mirrorless set-up.



The long zoom lens makes the FZ1000 a great option for photographing wildlife



Olympus Stylus XZ-2

At a glance

£200+ used

- 12MP 1/1.7in BSI CMOS sensor
- 28-112mm equivalent f/1.8-2.5 lens
- 3in tilting touchscreen
- Optional electronic viewfinder
- 1cm super macro mode

This camera has a nice f/1.8-2.5 4x optical zoom lens, and gives images with Olympus's pleasing colours, as well as offering impressive macro performance that let you focus as close as 1cm. A detachable grip lets you customise the camera, or you can simply remove it, although we can't see why anyone would want less grip.

You also get a built-in pop-up flash, and a hotshoe for external flash should you need it, that also takes an optional EVF. There's a 3in tilting touchscreen and a 12MP 1/1.7in BSI CMOS sensor. As this is smaller than some of the other cameras here, results at higher ISO speeds won't be as good. But if you can stick to the lower ISOs you should be pleased by the results.

It's been called an underrated gem by its owners, and offers particularly good handling for a compact camera. However, the lack of built-in Wi-Fi could be a deal-breaker for some.



Despite its relatively small sensor, the XZ-2 gives great images with attractive colours



Canon PowerShot S110

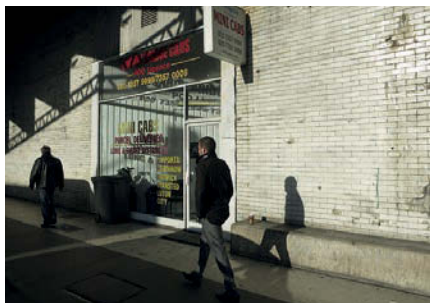
At a glance

£100-115 used

- 12MP 1/1.7in BSI CMOS sensor
- 24-120mm equivalent f/2.0-5.9 lens
- 3in screen
- 3cm macro mode
- Wi-Fi

For those looking for something compact and pocketable, the Canon PowerShot S110 is one of the smallest cameras available with full manual controls and raw shooting. It also features built-in Wi-Fi to make it easier to transfer images to a smartphone or tablet for sharing.

There's a 5x optical zoom lens, which gives an impressive range of 24-120mm equivalent, and this includes an f/2.0 aperture at the wide end, as well as built-in optical image stabilisation. There's a lens control ring to help make changing settings easier. With such a small camera body, it's worth using a wrist strap. Make sure you buy from a dealer with a warranty, as reports online suggest that the lens can jam if not looked after.



Canon's S110 is easily pocketable but still offers plenty of manual control



Panasonic Lumix TZ70

At a glance

£100 used

- 12MP 1/2.3in BSI CMOS sensor
- 24-720mm equivalent f/3.3-6.4 lens
- 1.1million-dot EVF
- 3in screen
- Wi-Fi

12MP was considered a bit of a 'sweet spot' for a compact camera as it offered reasonable noise performance for the time, and the Lumix TZ70 is a prime example.

The TZ70 offers an impressive 30x optical zoom lens, giving you a huge 24-720mm equivalent range. Even so, you can still fit it in a pocket, making this a great camera to take with you on walks, without having to worry about it. There's even an electronic viewfinder, which can help with visibility when shooting in bright conditions, but it's worth noting that it is particularly small.

This is also a bargain of a camera, as you can buy one new for around £229, which means second-hand prices have to be low to compete. You can pick up the camera for around £100, but they tend to sell quickly.



With its long zoom lens, the TZ70 is capable of homing in on distant subjects



Olympus Tough TG-6

At a glance

£300 used **£369** new

- 12MP 1/2.3in BSI CMOS sensor
- 25-100mm equivalent f/2.0-4.9 lens
- 3in screen
- 15m waterproof
- Wi-Fi, GPS

You might struggle to find one of these on UK retailers' used lists, and may need to look to eBay to find a used example. But it's worth seeking out an Olympus Tough TG-6 (or its predecessor the TG-5) if you want one of the best rugged cameras made. The TG-6 is waterproof to 15m, shockproof against drops, crushproof, and freezeproof. It would also make a great choice if you want a camera for adventures, or adventurous kids.

You'll find a range of advanced shooting modes, including Pro Capture, high-speed shooting, 4K video, an impressive 1cm macro mode, plus built-in focus stacking. There's even a range of accessories, including a ring flash adapter for close-up work. The camera also offers a range of dedicated underwater modes.



Olympus's Tough TG-series have long been the best underwater cameras you can buy

Darkroom Dave

When it comes to selling prints it's important to remember to shoot what other people will like on their wall, Dave Butcher tells **Damien Demolder**, not just what you fancy for yourself

There is something magical about selling a print. That someone is prepared to part with money in order to hang one of our creations on a wall in their house – and live with it every day – is perhaps the greatest compliment a photographer can expect. It is easy for anyone to say 'Oh, yes, that's lovely', but when the notes slide out of the wallet and into your hands you know they mean it.

A man who is by now very familiar with that feeling is black & white photographer and printer Dr Dave Butcher. Dave has been selling his handmade and expertly printed photos for over 35 years. It started as a side venture that grew into his main source of income after he left his job with film maker Ilford. Dave was a chemist at Ilford for 21 years and was taught to print 'the Ilford way' by the master printers in the firm. 'At Ilford we had a camera club,' Dave tells me. 'And there was an annual competition against the Kodak Camera Club. Every year we'd win the black & white category, and they'd always win the colour. Not a lot of people know that.'

Shoot to till

'For me photography is for recording what is in front of me and showing the scene the way it is to make something beautiful for the wall. It's for brightening up people's lives...in glorious black & white. I know

everything is in colour these days, but you can get lost in colour. If you put a vibrant colour in a picture the viewer's eye will go straight to it.

In black & white you spend more time looking at what's in the picture, the structure of it, the textures and you get to see things from a different perspective. People must think I'm colour blind as I can see in black & white – but then I've been doing it a long time. I was shooting in black & white, and making my own chemicals, in 1970 for my first job.

'When I started making pictures to sell as prints I thought I'd be able to make a living shooting pictures I wanted to take. Unfortunately life isn't quite like that. People don't buy the pictures I want to take – they buy the pictures they want to put on the wall. So I always have to keep that in mind. Most of the time I won't press the shutter unless I think the picture will sell.

'Best-sellers fall into two camps. Some people just want a nice picture for the wall, and they don't care where it was taken – so I spend a lot of my time making beautiful pictures these people will like. The other camp has to do with memories. People want a picture of a location that means something to them, that reminds them of a trip or an occasion. I sold a print of Hong Kong harbour at night to a couple who could see the apartment that they used to live in. I sold one of St



Above: One of Dave's best-sellers. Striding Edge in the snow

Top right: Colorado steam boat from the air

Mark's Square in Venice to a lady because it included the lamppost under which her husband proposed – it's that sort of thing. It has nothing to do with shutter speeds or what camera or lens I used.

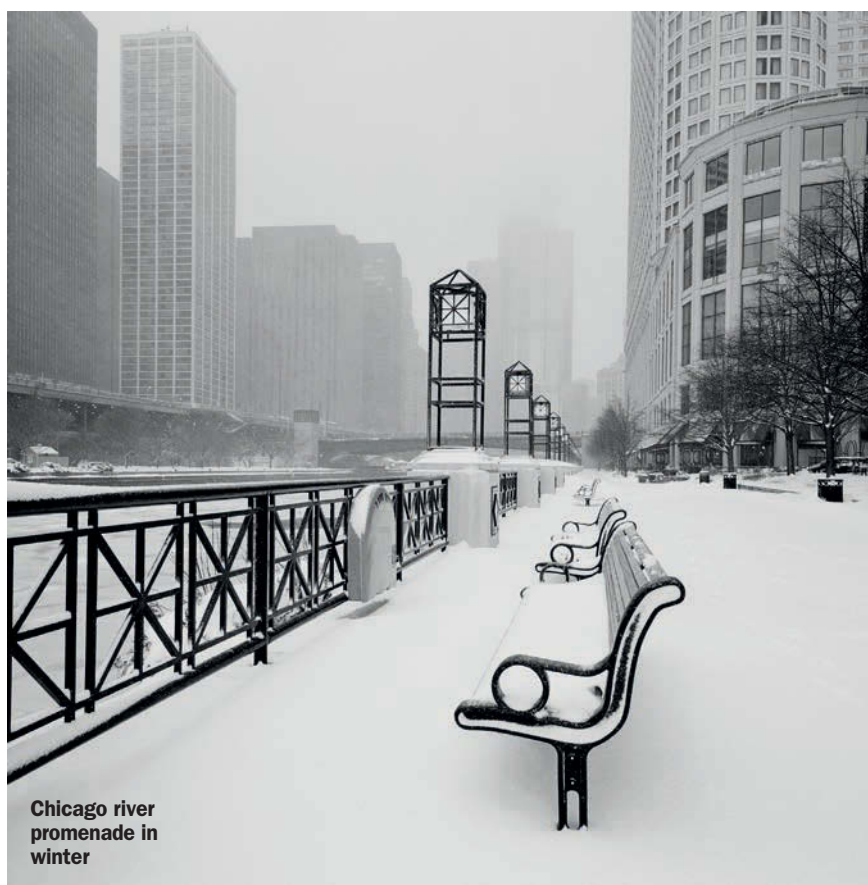
'I get quite excited when I know I've got a cracking shot, but that doesn't mean it will sell. It might be a cracking shot to me as a



photographer, and I'll make a nice print – but it might only end up on the wall in my office.'

Negs and drugs and bacon roll

'Years ago my wife worked for a pharmaceutical company that did drug trials and she was sent all over the country. When she had a trip she'd put some of my



Chicago river promenade in winter



Boulder, Colorado

'I became obsessed with a view in Boulder, Colorado. Friends took us to Indian Peaks Wilderness one summer and we were walking along a trail that came out at a small lake surrounded by trees with mountains in the background. I took a few pictures which were nice enough, but later in a bar I saw a picture of the same lake in winter. The photographer had got the trees in the shot but not the mountains, and it occurred to me that it would make a cracking picture with snow and an iced-over lake but it needed the mountains too. We went back and I worked out where to

position myself to get the right angle, and then resolved to go back in the winter to get the shot. I went back another six times before I got the picture I wanted. The trees had to be white with snow so I needed to be there before it got blown off. The lake had to be frozen and covered with snow – not just ice – and I wanted the snow blown over a rock that I used in the foreground for most of the shots. The mountains in the background had to be snow-capped and I wanted a good sky – not just a dull one. The final shot is one I'm really happy with, but I have yet to actually sell a print of it.'

Top: Dave went to this location six times before he got the image (top) he wanted. The four pictures below it are some previous attempts

pictures in the boot and sell them to cafes and gift shops from Fort William to Lyme Regis. A lot of the sales were one-offs, but from some we got quite a lot of business. Things really kicked off though after my first book in 2005 that I did with Roger Maile from Creative Monochrome and my name got known a bit more widely. I've done six books now, but the last ones were in 2015 when I did two books at the same time to bring the unit cost down.

'We also sold prints at art, craft and home interior shows around the country, such as the BBC Good Homes, Ideal Home, Grand Designs, and Country Living. There were Christmas shows too, and between October and early December we did a show every weekend. It was really hard work as we'd take 500 prints and maybe 40-50 framed pictures. I would take my camera sometimes if the shows were somewhere nice, and while my wife Jan worked on the stand I would nip off and take some pictures. Local pictures sell well, so these would be printed and ready for the same show the following year.

'Getting the price right for all the locations we showed in was difficult. My prints are Derbyshire prices, but in places like Glasgow people might think they were expensive, and in Surrey people mightn't buy because they weren't expensive enough.

'Some people don't see the value in a handmade print – they think everything is made on a computer. At one show a guy walked past the stand and said, 'Look at those prices. I could do something a lot cheaper than that.' His wife let him carry on walking and she came back to the stand and apologised. He didn't realise every print was made in the darkroom. I overheard an artist telling someone it had taken her 15 years to make her painting – she included the time it had taken her to train. In fact the painting had taken her 20 minutes but she couldn't tell the customer that. They wouldn't pay £1,000 for it if they knew.'

Glass of red

'I aim to make my pictures look more or less just as the scene did when I pressed the shutter. To help keep things looking natural I use filters over the lens, as you have to with black & white. Film doesn't match the sensitivity of the eye, and before there's any colour sensitising



Above: Hong Kong skylight at night

dyes put into the emulsion it is really blue-sensitive. It stays that way even when green and red dyes are added. So the only way to counteract that is to bung a piece of glass over the lens that is orange or red. When I see a blue sky I use a red or an orange filter, or a dark yellow if there is a lot of dark green in the scene. Most of the time I use orange as that's what brings the colour sensitivity back to the way we see things. If you just use a skylight filter blue skies will appear white and featureless.

'If it's cloudy and the sky has different shades of grey I use a yellow filter to add a bit of contrast to create some separation in the greys. Often a cloudy sky with layers of greys is better for me than a blue sky with white fluffy clouds. I also have a polariser, and use it to cut reflections in glass buildings or reflections off wet rocks.'

Brownie beginnings

'My father had an Agfa semi-automatic camera that had two lights in the viewfinder. If the red light was on you couldn't take a picture; if the green one was on you could. He found it too complicated so he gave it to me



Right: Big Ben in Westminster. This shot made Dave's biggest single sale





Above: Shadows in the snow, in McClure Pass near Carbondale, Colorado

➤ and I took all the family snaps from about the age of six or seven. I'd had some practice as my grandmother gave me a box Brownie when I was about five.

I left school in 1968 when I was 15 and bought a Praktica Super TL from the local camera shop which marked the start of me taking things more seriously. I bought a Nikkormat in 1973/4 and moved through various Nikons, before I decided the quality wasn't good enough for what I wanted to do in the darkroom, so I got a Mamiya 645 Super. I took up ski mountaineering and realised I couldn't take this brick up mountains as it wasn't easy to use in a blizzard, so I switched to Mamiya 6 bodies. They were brilliant – I still have three. The 50mm is pin-sharp.

I've ended up with three Mamiya 7 bodies, because they give me a bigger negative which means I can make bigger prints. I was working with image licensing companies who had a standard image size of 1x1/2m so the 6x7cm negative meant less upsizing in the scan. One firm blew one of my shots up

to 12ft square – way over 3m – from a 120 frame. You can print much bigger with digital printing processes than in the darkroom as you have sharpening tools that really help – so long as you don't overdo it. In my darkroom I can print to 20x24in. At Ilford we had an enlarger on rails that could print to 10ft wide and 7ft high from a 5x4in negative. I have the same enlarger here, but my wife won't let me put rails in our nice woodblock floor.

'With the Mamiya 7 bodies I love to use the 43mm lens. It needs a separate viewfinder which is a bit of a pain. I sometimes carry the 80mm, and will also take the 65mm. In the city I might also use the 150mm, but most of my shots are taken with the 43mm and 65mm. The sharpness drops off after f/16 with the 150mm, so I avoid the smaller apertures.'

Making the grade

'The secret of a good print is always to retain detail in the whites and the blacks, and to not over-print. Darkened skies are one of my pet

hates – and I don't like burn lines.

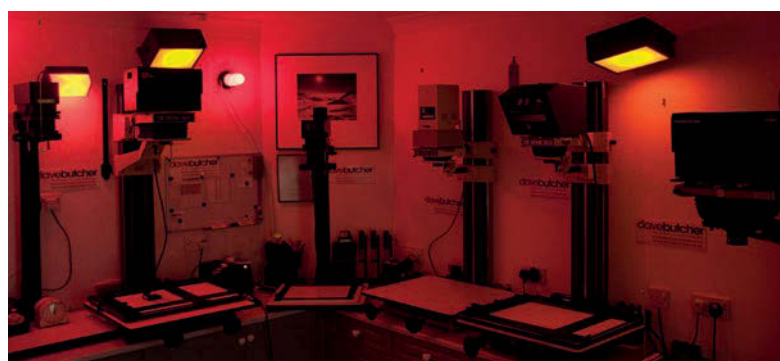
I look at a negative and know how I will print it, but that takes experience and you can't teach that. So I've made my own technique that will get people started, and that's what I've filmed for the videos on my Darkroom Dave YouTube channel. I do a test strip at grade 2 ½ and whatever the correct exposure time is I divide it in half. I do another test strip at grade 0 and another at grade 5, and see what they look like. I'll adjust from there with maybe two or three more test strips, then make the print. I always use Multigrade paper and use this split-grade printing technique.

'People starting out will of course use more paper at first as it takes time to be able to judge exposure correctly. Once you have the hang of it it's a relatively simple technique, but some people seem to want printing to be complicated.

'Inkjet prints can match prints on resin-coated paper but they aren't a match for the 2.1 maximum density of fibre-based paper – so fibre darkroom paper will give you a deeper black and a huge increase in contrast. Any of my prints that cost more than £15 are made on fibre-based paper. When you look at them in isolation though inkjet prints look great – it's only when they are next to a darkroom print on fibre-based paper that you can see they are chalk and cheese.'

Delta variants

'I don't have to choose which film I'm going to use as I only ever use one type. I used to use Ilford FP4,



Left: Dave's darkroom, with a range of enlargers for his workshops



Above: Moraine Lake reflection, Alberta, Canada

and occasionally HP5 for low-light work, but in around 2018 Ilford had some problems with it for a while so I switched. Now I use Ilford Delta 100 if I'm using a tripod and Delta 400 if I'm not. I like to keep things simple – I use the same dev time, always rate the 400 Delta at 320 and develop it for six minutes in 1+4 DDX developer. I like a more dilute developer as it gives better sharpness.

'The Delta negatives are very different to those from FP4 so I had to learn how to print them. The

reason I overrate and under-develop the film is to get a lower contrast neg that is easier to print. That was the way we did things at Ilford too.

'I did shoot some colour for some of my ski trips with a Ricoh GR1 that I bought for the purpose. Some pictures I don't take because I know they would be better in colour, but I don't miss colour.

'I don't like grain. That's why I moved from 35mm to 6x6cm medium format, and then to 6x7cm. I use a developer that gives pretty

fine grain. Others will give a finer grain, but you have to wait about half an hour for the development, and I'm not that patient. I have my technique worked out carefully too – I do batches of 5 rolls, and invert for 20 seconds and stand for 40 seconds for every minute. A lot of people don't realise that the more you agitate the lower your sharpness, so the standing time is important. Continuous agitation will cut the total dev time, but it also cuts down on your sharpness as you don't get the edge effects that are needed.'

Tips for beginners

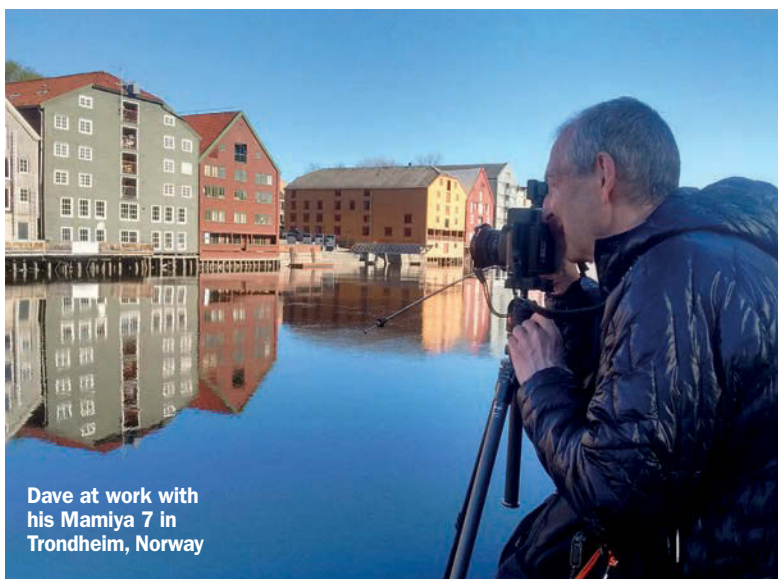
Don't let anyone put you off by saying that film photography is out of date and that it won't be around for long. Buy a manual camera so you have to learn the basics, get just one lens and use it until you get used to it. Only then think about getting other lenses to suit the sort of subjects you want to shoot. If you don't have a darkroom then you can scan your films, and if you want to do darkroom work then there are loads of places that can help you – like me, for example.

Don't get a quirky camera that will give you unreliable results, like a Holga, as you'll find it difficult to learn. Get something that will be consistent.



For more information on Dave's photography and books see his website davebutcher.co.uk For black & white photo and darkroom hints and tips see

darkroomdave.com, and Etsy shop for clearance prints: www.etsy.com/shop/DaveButcherPhotos



Dave at work with his Mamiya 7 in Trondheim, Norway



Full-frame mirrorless cameras can now be found in good used condition for well under £1,000

Get full-frame mirrorless for less

Interested in dipping a toe into the waters of full-frame mirrorless, but want to save money by buying second-hand? We guide you through our top picks

Little more than eight years ago, Sony shook up the camera market when it launched the world's first full-frame mirrorless models. For a while, the firm had this new sector all to itself, but everything changed in September 2018. Canon, Nikon, Panasonic and Sigma all jumped onto the bandwagon in a matter of weeks, with the latter two teaming up with Leica to form the L-Mount Alliance. Since then, most new camera models have been full-frame mirrorless.

If you're a DSLR user thinking of making the switch, it can look as though the main benefits that were initially touted for mirrorless, particularly reduced size and weight, aren't being realised in practice. But in fact, the real advantages of mirrorless cameras lie elsewhere. These include sophisticated autofocus systems that cover the entire image area, what-you-see-is-what-you-get electronic viewfinders, effective in-body stabilisation, and the ability to switch seamlessly between shooting with the

viewfinder and rear screen. Many new mirrorless lenses are also a step above their DSLR predecessors in quality.

So what about lenses?

One real barrier to switching camera systems lies with lenses. It can be seriously expensive to replace a DSLR lens set that you've built up over years. For existing Canon and Nikon users, your best bet may be to continue using your existing lenses via mount adapters, and gradually migrate as your funds dictate.

If you're considering building up a new lens system from scratch, Sony has a significant advantage. It licenses its E-mount to third-party lens makers, so there's a huge choice of optics available to suit any budget from the likes of Sigma, Tamron, Samyang and Zeiss. In contrast, Canon and Nikon seem to be intent on keeping their RF and Z mounts to themselves.

Full-frame mirrorless has now been around long enough for there to be a reasonably healthy supply of second-hand kit on the market. Without further ado, let's go ahead and look at our recommendations for the best used camera options, covering a range of sensor resolutions and price points.



The EOS RP works nicely with EF-mount DSLR lenses
Canon EOS RP, EF 70-300mm f/4-5.6 IS USM,
1/160sec at f/11, ISO 100

EF adaptor

Canon DSLR owners can continue to use all their existing EF-mount lenses with full functionality, including image stabilisation and autofocus, via the Mount Adaptor EF-EOS R (£119). This is such a popular approach that Canon has struggled to keep up with demand, with the adaptor's availability being notoriously patchy; it's often out of stock for months. However, cheaper alternatives are also available from the likes of Viltrox that appear to work perfectly well.

Canon EOS RP

● £800-£900 second-hand

THE EOS RP was Canon's second full-frame mirrorless camera after the original EOS R and remains the entry-level offering in the firm's line-up. Weighing in at less than 500g body-only, it's one of the most compact full-frame cameras available. At the time of its launch, Canon made a great play of the fact that it was smaller and lighter than the EOS 800D APS-C DSLR. Shop around and you should be able to find one in good second-hand condition for around £850, representing a healthy £200 saving over its current new price. If you're a Canon DSLR user interested in buying into full-frame mirrorless while using your existing lenses, it's by far the most affordable option.

Canon built the RP around the same 26.2MP full-frame sensor as its EOS 6D Mark II DSLR, with the firm's unique Dual Pixel AF enabling rapid and accurate autofocus across the entire

At a glance

- 26.2MP full-frame dual-pixel CMOS sensor
- ISO 50-102,400 (extended)
- 5 frames per second shooting
- 2.36m-dot EVF, 0.7x magnification
- 3-in, 1.04m-dot fully articulated touchscreen

image area. Its standard sensitivity range covers ISO 100-40,000, expandable to ISO 50-102,400, and the camera is capable of shooting at five frames per second. 4K/25p video recording is available, but with a significant 1.6x crop. Full HD is also available covering the full width of the frame.

You get a 2.36m-dot electronic viewfinder for composing your images, with a reasonable 0.7x magnification, which also provides an accurate preview of colour and exposure. It's complemented by a fully



articulated touchscreen that facilitates shooting at unusual angles in both landscape and portrait formats. Every aspect of the camera's operation can be controlled by touch, which helps to make up for a relatively limited set of physical controls.

Lightweight RF lenses

When the EOS RP was originally launched, it didn't seem to make much sense, as Canon only made one RF lens that matched its compact frame and price point. But since then, the firm has produced a set of optics that place it an entirely new light. Now, you can match it up with an array

of lightweight and reasonably affordable RF lenses, including the 24-105mm F4-7.1 IS STM (£479), 100-400mm F5.6-8 IS USM (£699), 50mm F1.8 STM (£219) and 85mm F2 IS Macro STM (£649). For those who'd like an all-in-one travel zoom, there's also the 24-240mm F4-6.3 IS USM (£959); while for nature lovers Canon makes a pair of unusually small ultra-telephotos, the 600mm F11 IS STM (£859) and 800mm F11 IS STM (£1,100). With these lenses now available, the EOS RP becomes a much more interesting proposition, as the basis of a lightweight full-frame kit.



The Z 7 delivers truly superb image quality
Nikon Z 7, 24-70mm f/4 at 41mm,
1.3secs at f/8, ISO 50

Nikon Z 7

● £1,500-£1,700 second-hand

NIKON launched its full-frame mirrorless Z system with a pair of cameras that used the same body design but different sensors. Here, we're concentrating on the 45.7MP Z 7, which provides a relatively affordable route into high-resolution shooting.

Built around a back-illuminated full-frame sensor, the Z 7 is capable of delivering the same image quality as the D850 – arguably Nikon's best-ever DSLR – in a much more portable package. But with 5-axis in-body image stabilisation (IBIS) built in that works with every lens, it also allows photographers to gain the full benefit of all those pixels more easily. Like the D850, the Z 7 is an impressive all-rounder,

being capable of shooting at up to 9 frames per second at full resolution. There are 493 focus points arranged across 90% of the frame, and the standard ISO 64-25,600 range can be extended to ISO 32-102,400.

Nikon equipped the Z 7 with a superb electronic viewfinder that's still one of the best you'll find. It's large and detailed, with 3.69m-dot resolution, 0.8x magnification, and a wonderfully clear live view feed that's great for judging focus and depth of

field. The LCD screen is a similarly excellent 3.2in unit and employs a dual-tilt design for high- or low-angle shooting, at least in landscape format.

Lens options

To make the most of the Z system's compact size and weight, Nikon adopted a slightly different approach to building up its lens range compared to its F-mount DSLR line-up. Premium optics are given the 'S' designation, and include both

Media

Possibly the Z 7's most controversial feature at launch was its reliance on a single card slot accepting XQD media, with no support for conventional SD cards. That's been remedied in its successor with the addition of an SD slot, while a firmware update has added CFexpress Type B support to the Z 7. But chances are you'll have to budget for a new memory card and reader, with both XQD and CFexpress being expensive; expect to pay at least £100.

f/2.8 and f/4 zooms, along with a set of fine f/1.8 primes ranging from 20mm to 85mm. There's also a small but developing range of affordable non-S optics.

Nikon DSLR owners can also use their F-mount lenses via Nikon's FTZ or FTZ2 adapters (the main difference being that the latter does without a tripod foot). Autofocus is available with AF-S and AF-P lenses that have built-in focus motors, but older AF D-type lenses require focusing manually. But this is easy enough, thanks to the excellent viewfinder.

At a glance

- 45.7MP full-frame BSI-CMOS sensor
- ISO 32-102,400 (extended)
- 9 frames per second shooting
- 3.69m-dot EVF, 0.8x magnification
- 2.1m-dot, 3.2in tilting touchscreen



Panasonic's unique kit zoom offers an unusually wide view
Panasonic Lumix S5, 20-60mm F3.5-5.6 at 20mm,
1/10sec at f/5.6, ISO 2000

Panasonic Lumix S5

£1,050-£1,150 second-hand

PANASONIC's mass-market full-frame mirrorless model is aimed at those who enjoy shooting moving images just as much as stills. It's a nicely designed camera that manages to be smaller than the firm's popular Micro Four Thirds GH5, despite having a sensor four times the size. It employs the L mount originally developed by Leica, which means it works with a good range of lenses from Panasonic, Leica and Sigma.

Like many of its peers, the S5 is based on a 24MP full-frame sensor. It offers a standard ISO range of 100-51,200, expandable to 50-204,800, and is capable of shooting at 5 frames per second with continuous autofocus, or 7fps with focus fixed. In addition, 5-axis in-body stabilisation is built in to keep images sharp and video footage steady. Below the 2.36m-dot EVF there's a fully articulated screen which aids with shooting at high and low angles in both horizontal and vertical formats. It can also face forwards for vlogging.



On that note, the S5 boasts impressive video credentials. It's capable of recording in 4K at 30fps with 4:2:2 10-bit colour from the full width of the sensor, or at 60fps using an APS-C crop. Other features include 4K HDR and raw video output over HDMI.

Photo friendly, too

The S5 offers plenty for stills photographers too. It handles very nicely, with all the key controls placed at your fingertips,

and a huge amount of user-customisation is available.

You get crisp, detailed images at low ISO settings, with files remaining perfectly usable up to ISO 12,800 at least. Particularly notable is the 96MP high-resolution multi-shot mode, which is unique on a full-frame camera at this price point. Its in-camera processing is speedy, and it does a good job of detecting and suppressing blur when it detects slight movement in the scene.

At a glance

- 24.2MP full-frame CMOS sensor
- ISO 50-204,800 (extended)
- 7 frames per second shooting
- 2.36m-dot EVF, 0.74x magnification
- 3in, 1.84m-dot fully articulated touchscreen

Unique kit zoom

One of the most interesting aspects of Panasonic's approach to the S5 is its unique kit zoom, the Lumix S 20-60mm F3.5-5.6. While its unusually wide view is undoubtedly aimed at vloggers recording themselves at arm's length, it should also appeal to photographers shooting architecture and landscapes. At £619.99, it's much more affordable than adding a specialist wideangle zoom to your kit. Paired with the Lumix S 70-300mm f/4.5-5.6 Macro OIS (£1,259), it should also make an excellent lightweight travel kit. Panasonic also offers a range of small and relatively affordable f/1.8 primes.



The Sigma fp is nicely complemented by the firm's small i-series prime lenses
Sigma fp, 45mm f/2.8, 1/100sec at f/2.8, ISO 400

Sigma fp

● £950-£1,050 second-hand

THE SIGMA fp is a camera unlike any other. By stripping out all but the bare essentials, the firm has made the smallest full-frame model currently available. What it's ended up with is a long way off the mainstream and comes with some real compromises. But nothing else can offer full-frame quality and interchangeable lenses in such a portable size.

In essence, the Sigma fp is a rectangular box measuring 113x70x45.3mm that houses a 24MP full-frame sensor, with an L mount at the front and a fixed 3.2in touchscreen on the back. There's no viewfinder, no mechanical shutter, and not even a handgrip. But the design is modular, so you can bolt a grip on one side and the optional EVF-11 viewfinder on the other. I'd recommend the small HG-11 grip.

The fp offers a sensitivity range of ISO 100-25,600 that's expandable to ISO 102,400. Uniquely, settings down to ISO 6 are also available, using a multi-frame approach that adds

together multiple ISO 100 shots.

With no mechanical shutter, there is some risk of rolling shutter distortion with fast-moving subjects. There's also no in-body stabilisation, and only a few L-mount lenses include optical stabilisation.

Little camera, big results

What you can't argue about is the image quality that the fp can provide. The sensor records

plenty of detail at low ISO, and when light levels drop, it'll deliver eminently usable results up to ISO 12,800 at least.

Ultimately, the Sigma fp has an undeniable charm as a small camera that works nicely with compact lenses and is a lot of fun to shoot with. This makes it an intriguing alternative to its larger SLR-shaped rivals for those seeking full-frame quality in the smallest possible package.

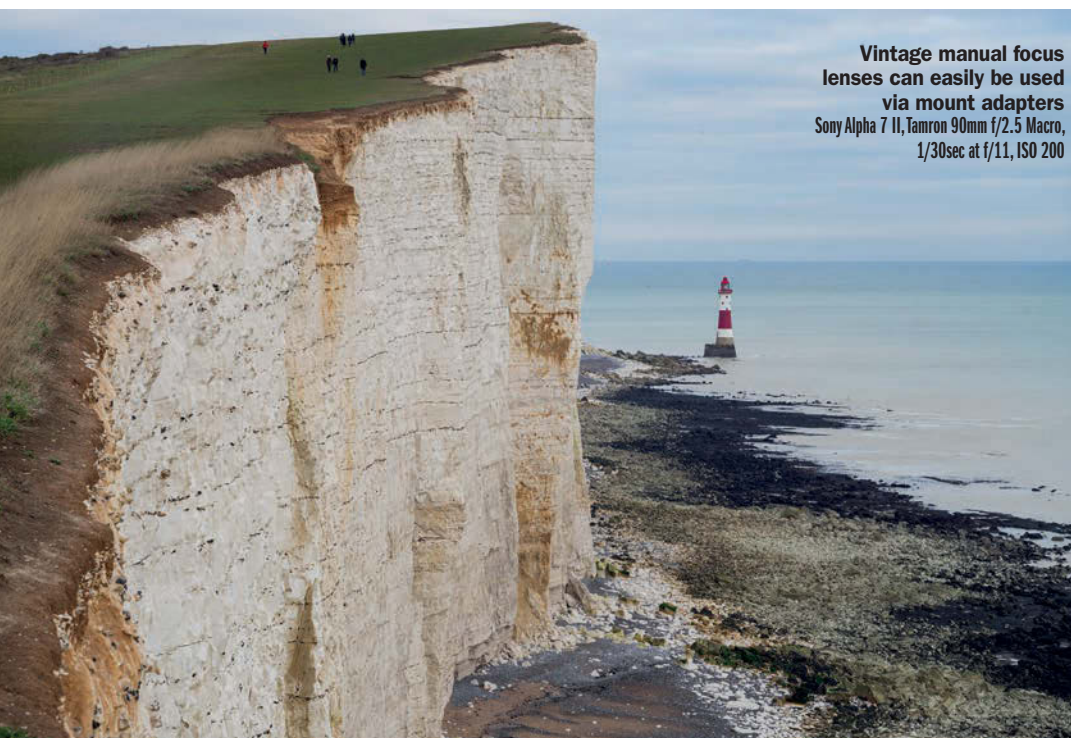


Sigma i-series lenses

While you can use the fp with any L-mount lens, it's arguably best suited for use with the firm's compact i-series primes, which boast premium metal construction complete with analogue aperture rings. The 45mm f/2.8 is the perfect companion for everyday shooting, complemented by the 24mm f/3.5 wideangle and 90mm f/2.8 telephoto. For those who prefer larger apertures, 24mm, 35mm and 65mm f/2 optics are also available. Meanwhile, if you can't live without a zoom, Sigma makes the 28-70mm F2.8 DG DN that's considerably smaller and lighter than its 24-70mm sibling.

At a glance

- 24MP full-frame CMOS sensor
- ISO 6-102,400 (extended)
- 18 frames per second shooting
- Optional bolt-on EVF-11 viewfinder
- 3.1in, 2.1m-dot fixed touchscreen



Vintage manual focus lenses can easily be used via mount adapters
Sony Alpha 7 II, Tamron 90mm f/2.5 Macro,
1/30sec at f/11, ISO 200

Any lens you like

Like all E-mount cameras, the A7 II can make use of a vast array of lenses. Not only is Sony's FE range larger than rival line-ups, plenty of third-party options are also available, from small, affordable Samyang primes through to sublime offerings from Zeiss. In between, Sigma and Tamron both make excellent optics at competitive prices. It's even possible to get electronic adapters for Canon EF-mount lenses, although they don't work as well as on Canon's EOS R cameras. Last but not least, the A7 II is an excellent vehicle for shooting with vintage manual optics from old 35mm film cameras via mount adapters.

Sony Alpha 7 II

● £600-£750 second-hand

SONY'S Alpha 7 range is the longest-running full-frame mirrorless line-up of all, which means that there's a bewildering array of models available second-hand across a wide range of price points. The high-resolution A7R range is of particular interest to studio and landscape shooters, while the 12MP A7S models are prized by videographers. In between, the 'basic' Alpha 7 line represents all-rounders aimed at enthusiast photographers.

While the original Alpha 7 from 2013 has a certain charm to it, and can often be found used for under £500, we've chosen to highlight its successor that appeared just 13 months later. The Sony Alpha 7 II brought major improvements in handling, including improved control dials and a larger, more conventional handgrip, while also introducing 5-axis in-body image stabilisation to Sony's mirrorless line-up. It's only recently been officially discontinued, and you can pick

At a glance

- 24MP full-frame CMOS sensor
- ISO 50-25,600 (extended)
- 5 frames per second shooting
- 2.36m-dot EVF, 0.71x magnification
- 1.23m-dot tilting LCD

up used models in excellent condition for under £750 from reputable retailers. This is £600 less than its much-feted successor, the A7 III.

While its spec may look a little dated by modern standards, the A7 II still has plenty to offer. Its 24MP sensor offers excellent image quality at low ISO settings, with particularly impressive dynamic range, while providing a sensitivity range up to ISO 25,600. Continuous shooting runs at 5 frames per second and there are 117 autofocus points to choose from covering almost the entirety of the image area. However, only

the central region provides faster phase detection AF. The 2.36m-dot viewfinder is joined by a 3in screen that tilts up and down, but doesn't offer touch functionality. Typically for its vintage, only Full HD video recording is available.

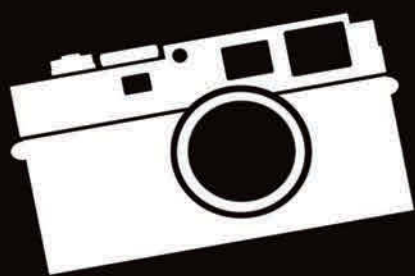
Small and light

While the A7 II isn't quite as lightweight as either its predecessor or the Canon EOS RP, mainly due to the addition of IBIS, it's still pretty petite in

full-frame terms. It's noticeably lighter than later models, too, although in part this is due to the small and rather underpowered NP-FW50 battery. I'd budget on acquiring a few spares; thankfully third-party options are cheap and easy to find.

Overall, the Sony A7 II brings a lot to the table for photographers at a very attractive price. It certainly has its foibles, but given its excellent raw image quality and compact size, they're easily forgiven.





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SECOND-HAND CLASSIC

Nikon Z 6

Three years on from its launch, the original Z 6 makes a cracking mirrorless buy at under £1,000

Introduced alongside Nikon's high-resolution Z 7, the Z 6 is built around the same body as its sister model and was designed to entice those after a general-purpose and more affordable full-frame mirrorless camera. Behind its Z-mount, which is compatible with F-mount lenses via an FTZ adapter, is a 24.5MP CMOS sensor that lets users shoot between an expanded range of ISO 50-204,800. An EXPEED 6 image processor facilitates burst shooting at 12fps, it has 273 phase detection points, face detection and highly effective 5-axis in-body stabilisation. Battery life has nothing on the stamina of Nikon's full-frame DSLRs, but it does support portable charging on the go via USB. It also boasts a weather-sealed body, 3.6-million-dot EVF and 3.2in touchscreen that tilts in the landscape orientation.

What we said

- 'Nikon has thrown everything into making the finest mirrorless cameras it can'
- 'Nikon DSLR users will be bowled over by the viewing experience of the large electronic viewfinder'
- 'With the Z 6, Nikon has made its best general-purpose, full-frame camera ever'
- 'It's just what many loyal Nikon users who'd like to make the transition from DSLR to mirrorless have long been waiting for'

How it fares today

Two areas where the Z 6 picked up initial criticism were its inability to back up images to a second card loaded in a second slot, and that the autofocus lagged a little behind its Canon and Sony competition. Its buffer performance isn't as impressive as the newer Z 6II either, which is capable of shooting 125 raw files continuously.

See over to find out what Nikon Z 6 owners have to say

What to pay

The price of the original Z 6 has steadily fallen to the point now where excellent condition second-hand examples can be picked up for around £990 with all the original packaging. Like-new used examples in near-mint condition with almost no signs of use can also be found for £1,040, while good overall condition Z 6's with some cosmetic signs of use go for £889.

New alternatives

In 2020, Nikon followed up with the Z 6II. Responding to user feedback it introduced a second SD card slot beside the XQD. It's also equipped with a second EXPEED 6 image processor, which combined with tweaks to AF algorithm, sees it shoot faster (14fps) and focus more accurately. 4K video at 60fps with a 1.5x crop is available via new firmware. It currently costs £1,999.



Amateur
Photographer
Testbench
GOLD
★★★★★

The Z 6 can shoot 35 12-bit raw files at 12fps. High-speed continuous shooting drops to 9fps when shooting 14-bit raw files



If you're prepared to apply a little noise reduction in post, very acceptable results can be achieved at ISO 12,800 as well as ISO 25,600 at a push



At a glance

£889-£1,039

body only

- 24.5MP full-frame CMOS sensor
- ISO 50-204,800 (extended)
- 4K video (30/25/24p)
- 310-shot battery life with EN-EL15b
- 675g (with battery and card)

For and against

- + Superb handling
- + Compatible with F-mount lenses via adapter
- + Easy menu to navigate
- + Weather-sealed and built to last
- Single XQD card slot
- Mediocre battery life
- Positioning of some buttons
- Buffer performance compared to Z 6II

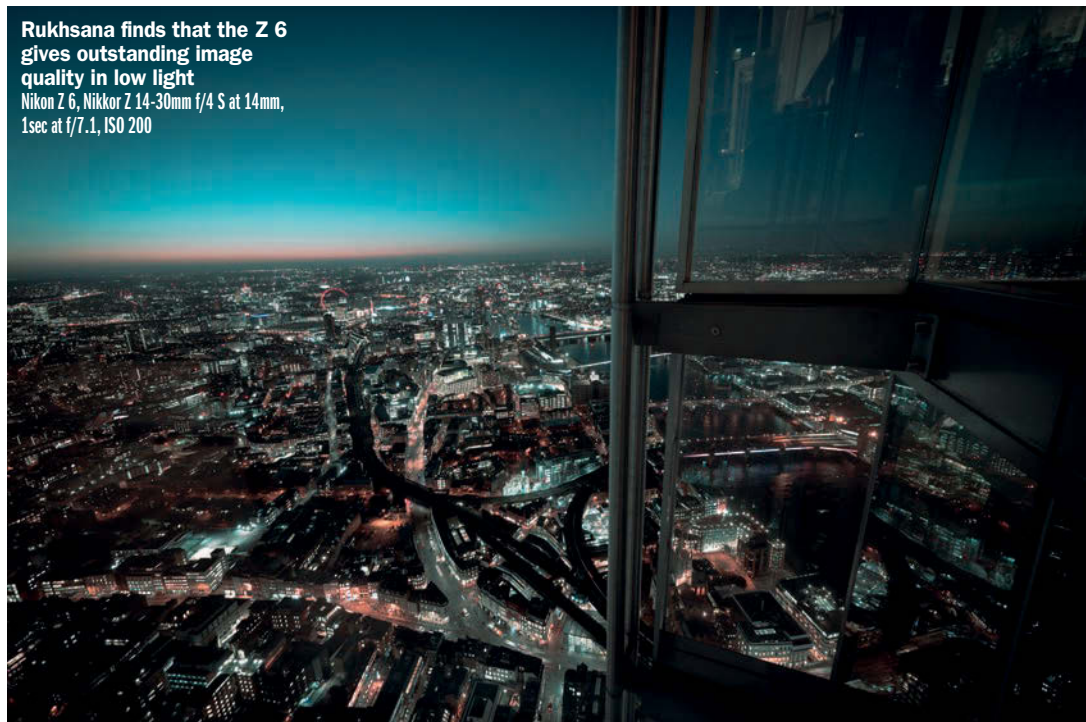
What the owners think

Three Nikon Z 6 users give their verdict

Rukhsana Jogee

I was sold from the first day that I used the Z 6 and I'm smitten with the advantages it offers over a DSLR. At the time of production, I bought it with the FTZ adapter. This allowed me to use my existing F-mount lens and save the expense of buying a new lens – a smart move from Nikon. The build quality is robust yet light and very compact when carrying around. I often shoot in low light and the image quality is outstanding. I've been particularly impressed by how it keeps noise to a minimum when it's pushed to the extreme of its wide ISO range. Recently, I've started using the time-lapse and video function and I'm awestruck by the results. My only criticism after three years

Rukhsana finds that the Z 6 gives outstanding image quality in low light
Nikon Z 6, Nikkor Z 14-30mm f/4 S at 14mm, 1sec at f/7.1, ISO 200



of use is that the sensor is clearly exposed when you swap lenses. It has a tendency to attract dust spots and so I send it for sensor cleaning frequently. Other than that, I love the camera, and couldn't be happier with it. More of my images

can be found on Instagram @visuals.by.ruks

For and against

- + Robust yet lightweight
- + Noise performance at high ISO
- Sensor is susceptible to dust spots
- Can't backup to a second card

Warren Wise

I have used Nikon from the very start of my photography journey. I began with a D3300 and progressed through Nikon bodies until I bought the Z 6 in 2019. I wasn't sure how I'd get on, as it was small compared to my previous D810, but I took to it instantly. The EVF was a game-changer for me, with focus peaking being welcome for my landscape work. The low-light capabilities are amazing, so it is perfect for astrophotography. The build quality is faultless and it feels reassuringly weighty without being cumbersome. The ergonomics are very well considered except for the two Fn buttons placed near the lens mount. I have quite large hands and I often press them by accident. Overall, though, I am more than satisfied and it'll be a long time before I replace it. My website can be found at www.warrenwise.co.uk



For and against

- + Large electronic viewfinder
- Positioning of Fn buttons

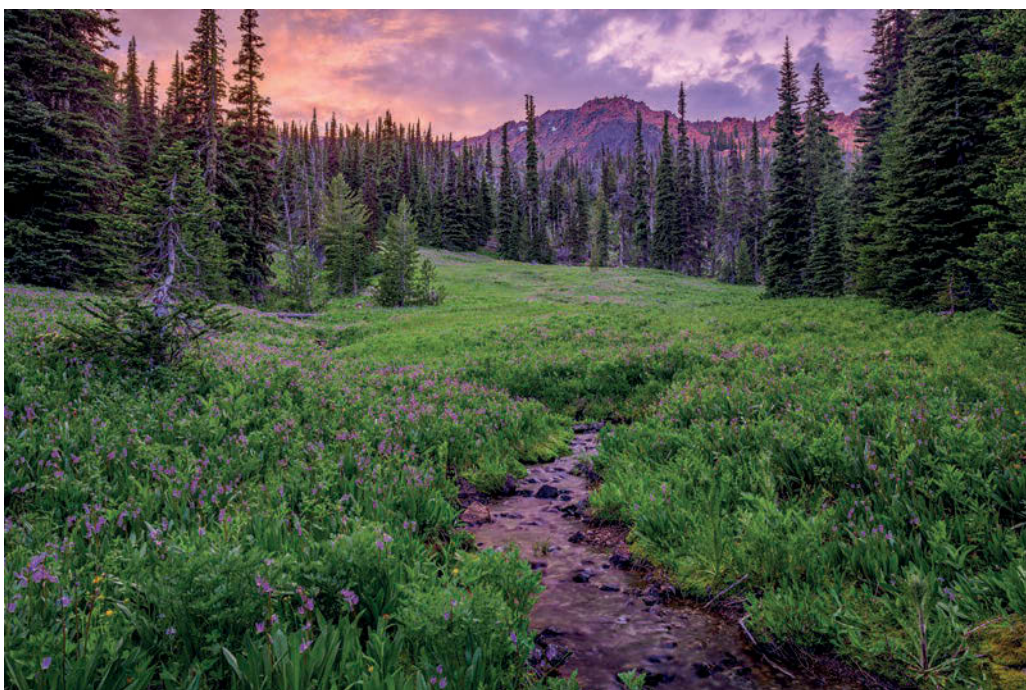
The Z 6 can be used with F-mount DSLR lenses via Nikon's FTZ adapter
Nikon Z 6, Sigma 24mm f/1.4 DG HSM Art, 13secs at f/1.4, ISO 450

Here, a long exposure has given interesting light trails from a passing boat
Nikon Z 6, Nikkor Z 24-70mm f/4 S at 24mm, 13secs at f/11, ISO 100



Adam Isaacson

Prior to owning my Z 6 I was the happy owner of a Nikon D5600. Unfortunately, that camera was stolen, but I took the misfortune as an opportunity to upgrade. I knew I wanted full frame and since buying my Z 6, I haven't looked back. It's a fabulous camera for an advanced amateur photographer like myself. Its compact size makes it perfect for clipping to my backpack on beautiful hikes in the Pacific Northwest or wandering around my hometown of Seattle. We get a lot of rain, so it's important the Z 6 is weather-sealed. I was nervous the first couple of times I took it out in the rain, but I've never had problems. The Z 6 has allowed me to capture striking landscapes and cityscapes thanks to its superb dynamic range. Moving forward I plan to start a side business selling prints. More of my images are on Instagram @adam_noble86



Adam's Z 6 has been a trusty companion on hikes across the Pacific Northwest

Nikon Z 6, Nikkor Z 24-70mm f/4 S at 24mm, 2.5secs at f/10, ISO 100

For and against

- ✚ Durability and compact size
- ✚ Only accepts expensive XQD cards

BLAST FROM THE PAST

Exakta Varex IIb

John Wade reviews a classic, and slightly strange, German SLR

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EXAKTAS are not like other 35mm single lens reflexes (SLRs). They do things differently. They have unexpected features not found elsewhere. And they put their controls in all the wrong places.

In 1936, the German Ihagee company produced the Kine Exakta, the world's first 35mm SLR. The company continued making Exaktas until 1970, when Ihagee was absorbed by Pentacon. Along the way, the Varex IIb arrived with all the peculiarities that Exakta fans have come to love. Following Exakta designs from Day One, the Varex IIb adopts a tapered body design that slopes away on each side of the lens. The film loads on the right, so the take-up spool, and therefore the lever wind, are on the left. The shutter button is also on the left and on the front, not the top, of the body. It's under a lever that protrudes from the lens. Pushing this lever back towards the body first stops



Exakta Varex IIb with pentaprism viewfinder fitted and waist-level finder

the lens down to its pre-set aperture then goes on to press the shutter release. The eye-level pentaprism viewfinder is interchangeable with a waist-level finder.

The top shutter speed is 1/1,000sec, but the slowest speed is 12 seconds. This is achieved by setting the speed dial to its 'B' setting. Then the delayed action knob, situated opposite the wind lever on to the top plate, is wound as far as it will go, before lifting the same knob and turning it back to its required speed. Press the release, a clockwork motor whirrs and the shutter fires at speeds from 1/4sec down to the full 12 seconds.

The rewind knob is on the bottom of the camera, not to be

confused with a similar knob at the opposite end which opens the camera back and sits next to a stud that pulls out from the base to operate a film slitting device. Like most Exaktas, the Varex IIb can be irritating to use – but it's a great piece of engineering and it's lovely to look at.

What's good Quality lenses made by Zeiss, Meyer Optik, Steinheil and Schneider.

What's bad Awkward left hand operation of shutter release and film wind.



Inside the Exakta, with its right-to-left film loading system and showing the film slitting device extended



View from the top, showing the delayed action knob on the right that doubles as a slow speed setting device

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Buying Guide

109
cameras
listed &
rated

Our comprehensive listing of key camera specifications

Cameras

Cameras come in three types: DSLRs with optical viewfinders, mirrorless models with electronic viewing, and compact cameras with non-interchangeable lenses

Controls

Entry-level cameras tend to have simple, easy-to-understand controls, while more expensive models add lots of buttons and dials to give quick access to settings.

Viewfinder

The biggest difference between DSLRs and mirrorless cameras is that the latter use electronic, rather than optical viewfinders. Some advanced compact cameras also have built-in electronic viewfinders to complement their rear LCD screens.

Compact cameras

These range from small, pocketable models to large bridge-type cameras with long zoom lenses and SLR-style designs. In this guide, we're only including those with relatively large sensors for high image quality, raw format recording and manual controls.



Handgrip

DSLRs traditionally have relatively large handgrips, while many mirrorless models have much smaller grips to keep size down. However, some can accept accessory grips to improve handling with larger lenses.

Lens mount

Each camera brand uses its own lens mount, and mirrorless cameras use different lenses to DSLRs even from the same brand. However, mirrorless models can often use DSLR lenses via a mount adapter.

ALMOST all serious photographers prefer to use cameras with interchangeable lenses, as this gives the greatest degree of creative flexibility. At one time, this meant digital single-lens-reflex (DSLR) cameras, but these have now been joined by mirrorless cameras that use electronic viewfinders. The latest models are true alternatives to DSLRs, offering the same image quality and creative options. Camera

manufacturers offer a range of options, from simple, relatively inexpensive beginner-friendly designs, to sophisticated professional models. In the middle of the range you'll find enthusiast cameras with more-advanced control layouts. Meanwhile the term 'compact' refers to cameras with built-in lenses, regardless of their size. Many offer excellent image quality and full manual control.

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Mirrorless cameras				SENSOR SIZE	RESOLUTION (MP)	LENS MOUNT	MAX ISO	VIDEO	MIC IN/OUT	AF POINTS	BURST MODE (FPS)	VIEWFINDER	BUILT-IN Wi-Fi	FLASH	SCREEN SIZE (in)	ARTICULATED LCD	TOUCHSCREEN	BATTERY LIFE (SHOTS)	WIDTH (mm)	HEIGHT (mm)	DEPTH (mm)	WEIGHT (g)
NAME & MODEL	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY												SHOOTING	SCREEN			DIMENSIONS			
Canon EOS M200	£499		Basic entry-level viewfinderless model gains 4K video recording	APS-C	24.1	Canon M	25,600	3840		143	6.1				3			315	108.2	67.1	35.1	299
Canon EOS M50 Mark II	£699	4★	Likeable, easy-to-use entry-level APS-C model with viewfinder	APS-C	24.2	Canon M	51,200	3840		143	10				3			250	116.3	88.1	58.7	387
Canon EOS M6 Mark II	£869	4★	Sports 32.5MP sensor and 14fps shooting, uses removable viewfinder	APS-C	32.5	Canon M	51,200	3840		143	14				3			305	119.6	70	49.2	398
Canon EOS RP	£1400	4★	Compact and affordable but over-simplified full-frame camera ever	FF	26.2	Canon RF	102,400	3840		4779	5				3			250	132.5	85	70	485
Canon EOS R	£2350	4★	Canon's first full-frame mirrorless uses the EOS 5D Mark IV's sensor	FF	30.3	Canon RF	102,400	3840		5655	8				3.2			350	135.8	98.3	84.4	660
Canon EOS R3	£5880		High-speed, pro-spec flagship model that's packed full of clever technology	FF	24.1	Canon RF	204,800	6000		4779	30				3.2			860	150	142.6	87.2	1015
Canon EOS R5	£4200	4.5★	Remarkable 45MP powerhouse capable of internal 8K video recording	FF	45	Canon RF	102,400	4096		5940	12				3.2			320	135.8	97.5	88	738
Canon EOS R6	£2500	5★	Superb all-rounder with in-body stabilisation and dual card slots	FF	20.1	Canon RF	204,800	3840		6072	12				3			380	138.4	97.5	88.4	680
Fujifilm X-A7	£699	3★	Sports large fully articulated LCD, but frustrating controls	APS-C	24.2	Fuji X	51,200	3840		425	6				3.5			270	119	67.7	41.1	320
Fujifilm X-E4	£799	4★	Sharply-styled, compact mirrorless model with a tilt-up selfie screen	APS-C	26.1	Fuji X	51,200	3840		425	20				3			460	121.3	72.9	32.7	364
Fujifilm X-Pro3	£1799	4★	Employs unusual hidden rear LCD design that polarises opinions	APS-C	26.1	Fuji X	51,200	4096		425	20				3			370	140.5	82.8	46.1	497
Fujifilm X-S10	£949	5★	Fine SLR-styled model with in-body image stabilisation and large handgrip	APS-C	26.1	Fuji X	51,200	3840		425	20				3			325	126	85.1	65.4	465
Fujifilm X-T200	£749	3.5★	Fine handling and great image quality, but slow and buggy in use	APS-C	24.2	Fuji X	51,200	3840		425	8				3.5			270	121	83.7	55.1	370
Fujifilm X-T30	£849	5★	Superb mid-range model that borrows much of its tech from the X-T3	APS-C	26.1	Fuji X	51,200	3840		425	8				3			380	118.4	82.8	46.8	383
Fujifilm X-T30 II	£769	5★	Gains higher-resolution screen and numerous small updates over X-T30	APS-C	26.1	Fuji X	51,200	4096		425	8				3			390	118.4	82.8	46.8	378
Fujifilm X-T3	£1349	5★	New sensor and improved autofocus make it the best APS-C camera yet	APS-C	26.1	Fuji X	51,200	4096		425	20				3			390	132.5	92.8	58.8	539
Fujifilm X-T4	£1549	5★	Exciting update with in-body stabilisation and fully articulated screen	APS-C	26.1	Fuji X	51,200	4096		425	20				3			500	134.6	92.8	63.8	607
Leica CL	£2250	4.5★	Gorgeous APS-C mirrorless model with viewfinder and touchscreen	APS-C	24.2	Leica L	50,000	3840		49	10				3			220	131	78	45	403
Leica TL2	£1700	4★	Update to the TL with 24MP sensor and much faster operation	APS-C	24	Leica L	50,000	3840		49	20				3.7			250	134	69	33	399
Leica SL2	£5300	4★	Sports 47.3MP full-frame sensor, in-body stabilisation and 5K video	FF	47.3	Leica L	50,000	5120		225	20				3.2			370	147	107	83	916
Leica SL2-S	£3975	4★	More affordable 24MP version of the SL2 with pro video features	FF	24.6	Leica L	100,000	4096		225	25				3.2			510	146	107	83	931
Nikon Z 5	£1719	4★	Simplified version of the Z 6, comes with compact 24-50mm f/4-6.3 zoom	FF	24.3	Nikon Z	102,400	3840		273	4.5				3.2			470	134	100.5	69.5	675
Nikon Z 6	£2099	5★	Full-frame mirrorless all-rounder with 24MP sensor and 12fps shooting	FF	24.5	Nikon Z	204,800	3840		273	12				3.2			330	134	100.5	67.5	675
Nikon Z 6II	£1999	4.5★	Second-generation full-frame mirrorless model with useful updates	FF	24.5	Nikon Z	204,800	3840		273	14				3.2			410	134	100.5	69.5	705
Nikon Z 7	£3399	5★	High-resolution full-frame mirrorless with in-body stabilisation	FF	45.7	Nikon Z	102,400	3840		493	9				3.2			330	134	100.5	67.5	675
Nikon Z 7II	£2999	4.5★	Gains dual card slots, faster shooting, 4K 60p video and vertical grip option	FF	45.7	Nikon Z	102,400	3840		493	10				3.2			420	134	100.5	69.5	705
Nikon Z 9	£5299		High-speed, high-resolution flagship with pro build and connectivity	FF	45.7	Nikon Z	102,400	7680		493	20				3.2			700	149	149.5	90.5	1340
Nikon Z 50	£849	5★	Well-specified APS-C mirrorless model boasts excellent handling	DX	20.9	Nikon Z	204,800	3840		209	11				3.2			320	126.5	93.5	60	450
Nikon Z fc	£899	4★	Lovely-looking retro-styled model with fully articulated touchscreen	DX	20.9	Nikon Z	204,800	3840		209	11				3			300	134.5	93.5	43.5	445

ALL PRICES ARE RRP'S. STREET PRICES MAY VARY

We've tried our hardest to ensure that the information in this guide is as complete and accurate as possible. However, some errors will inevitably have crept in along the way: if you spot one, please let us know by emailing ap.ed@kelsey.co.uk. Unfortunately we don't have space to list every single product on the market, so we don't include the most expensive speciality items. **Before making a purchase we advise you to check prices, along with any crucial specifications or requirements, with either a reputable retailer or the manufacturer's website.**

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Mirrorless cameras

Mirrorless cameras				sensor size	resolution (mp)	lens mount	max iso	video	mic input	af points	burst mode (fps)	viewfinder	built-in wi-fi	flash	screen size (in)	articulated lcd	touchscreen	battery life (shots)	width (mm)	height (mm)	depth (mm)	weight (g)
name & model	rrp	score	summary								shooting				screen					dimensions		
Olympus PEN E-P7	£749	4★	Viewfinderless model with 20MP sensor and creative processing controls	4/3	20.3	Mic4/3	25,600	3840		121	15				3			360	118.3	68.5	38.1	337
Olympus OM-D E-M10 IV	£699	4.5★	Compact, lightweight, enjoyable to use and takes great-looking pictures	4/3	20.2	Mic4/3	25,600	3840		121	15				3			360	121.7	84.4	49	383
Olympus OM-D E-M5 III	£1100	5★	Very capable camera with a small, lightweight, weather-sealed body	4/3	20.4	Mic4/3	25,600	4096		121	10				3			310	125.3	85.2	49.7	414
Olympus OM-D E-M1 III	£1600	5★	Super-fast, incredible IS and packed full of advanced features	4/3	20.4	Mic4/3	25,600	4096		121	60				3			420	134.1	90.9	68.9	580
Olympus OM-D E-M1X	£2800	4.5★	Pro-spec high-speed model with built-in vertical grip	4/3	20.4	Mic4/3	25,600	4096		121	60				3			2580	144.4	146.8	75.4	997
OM System OM-1	£2000	5★	Boasts 120fps continuous shooting and subject-detection AF	4/3	20.4	Mic4/3	102,400	4096		1053	120				3			520	134.8	91.6	72.7	599
Panasonic Lumix G9	£1499	4.5★	High-speed, rugged photo-centric flagship camera with in-body IS	4/3	20.3	Mic4/3	25,600	3840		225	9				3			890	136.9	97.3	91.6	658
Panasonic Lumix G100	£590	4★	Small SLR-shaped camera specifically designed for vloggers	4/3	20.3	Mic4/3	25,600	3840		49	10				3			270	115.6	82.5	54.2	345
Panasonic Lumix GX880	£400		Tiny easy-to-use pocket camera with tilting screen and 4K video	4/3	16	Mic4/3	25,600	3840		49	5.8				3			210	106.5	64.6	33.3	270
Panasonic Lumix GX9	£699	4★	Compact body with tilting screen and viewfinder, and 5-axis stabilisation	4/3	20.3	Mic4/3	25,600	3840		49	9				3			900	124	72.1	46.8	450
Panasonic Lumix GH5 II	£1499	4.5★	Video-focused high-end model with in-body stabilisation and 4K video	4/3	20.2	Mic4/3	25,600	4096		225	12				3			410	138.5	98.1	87.4	727
Panasonic Lumix GH5S	£2199		Professional video version of GH5 with 10.2MP multi-aspect sensor	4/3	10.2	Mic4/3	204,800	4096		225	11				3.2			410	138.5	98.1	87.4	660
Panasonic Lumix GH6	£1999		Hefty high-end video model with new 25MP sensor and 5.7K recording	4/3	25.2	Mic4/3	25,600	5728			14				3			330	138.4	100.3	99.6	823
Panasonic Lumix S1	£2199	4.5★	24MP full-frame mirrorless with exceptional viewfinder	FF	24.2	Leica L	204,800	3840		225	9				3.2			380	148.9	110	96.7	899
Panasonic Lumix S1H	£3600		Specialist full-frame mirrorless model designed for pro-level video	FF	24.2	Leica L	204,800	4096		225	9				3.2			380	151	114.2	110.4	1164
Panasonic Lumix S1R	£3399	4.5★	High-resolution full-frame mirrorless with in-body stabilisation	FF	47.3	Leica L	51,200	3840		229	9				3.2			360	148.9	110	96.7	898
Panasonic Lumix S5	£1800	4.5★	Compact-bodied, enthusiast-focused model designed for both stills and video	FF	24.2	Leica L	204,800	3840		225	7				3			440	132.6	97.1	81.9	714
Sigma fp	£1999	4★	Smallest full-frame mirrorless, but compromised features and handling	FF	24.6	Leica L	102,400	3840		49	18				3.2			280	112.6	69.9	45.3	422
Sigma fp L	£1999	4★	High-resolution version of the fp with 61MP full-frame sensor	FF	61.0	Leica L	102,400	3840		49	10				3.2			240	112.6	69.9	45.3	427
Sony Alpha 6000	£670	4.5★	A fine camera for its time, but now very much showing its age	APS-C	24	Sony E	25,600	1080		179	11				3			310	120	67	45	344
Sony Alpha 6100	£830		Update to the A6000 with Sony's latest AF technology and 4K video	APS-C	24.2	Sony E	51,200	3840		425	11				3			380	120	66.9	59.4	396
Sony Alpha 6400	£1000	4★	Extraordinary new autofocus system, but in an outdated body design	APS-C	24.2	Sony E	102,400	3840		425	11				3			360	120	66.9	49.9	403
Sony Alpha 6600	£1450	4★	In-body stabilisation and impressive autofocus, but frustrating body design	APS-C	24.2	Sony E	102,400	3840		425	11				3			720	120	66.9	59	503
Sony Alpha 1	£6500	5★	Flagship model with an unprecedented combination of resolution and speed	FF	50.1	Sony E	102,400	7680		759	30				3			530	128.9	96.9	80.8	737
Sony Alpha 7 II	£1498	5★	The full-frame Alpha 7 II includes in-body image stabilisation	FF	24.3	Sony E	25,600	1080		117	5				3			350	126.9	95.7	59.7	556
Sony Alpha 7 III	£1999	5★	Fine camera with 10fps shooting and 4K video recording	FF	24.2	Sony E	204,800	3840		693	10				3			610	126.9	95.6	73.7	650
Sony Alpha 7 IV	£2400	5★	Excellent all-rounder with 33MP sensor and fully articulated screen	FF	33.0	Sony E	204,800	3840		759	10				3			610	131	96.4	79.8	658
Sony Alpha 7C	£1900	3.5★	Compact full-frame design let down by poor handling and tiny EVF	FF	24.2	Sony E	204,800	3840		693	10				3			680	124	71.1	59.7	509
Sony Alpha 7R III	£3200	5★	Impressive image quality and handling, but starting to look a little dated	FF	42.4	Sony E	102,400	3840		399	10				3			650	126.9	95.6	73.7	657
Sony Alpha 7R IV	£3500	5★	Superb high-resolution, full-frame mirrorless with new 61MP sensor	FF	61.0	Sony E	102,400	3840		567	10				3			670	128.9	96.4	77.5	665
Sony Alpha 7S III	£3800	4.5★	Huge update gains fully articulated screen and new touch interface	FF	12.1	Sony E	409,600	3840		759	10				3			600	128.9	96.9	80.8	600
Sony Alpha 9 II	£4800		A9 gains professional connectivity options and an improved body design	FF	24.2	Sony E	204,800	3840		693	20				3			500	128.9	96.4	77.5	678
Sony ZV-E10	£680	4★	Designed for vlogging, with high-end microphone and fully articulated screen	APS-C	24.2	Sony E	51,200	3840		425	11				3			440	113	64.2	44.7	343

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NAME & MODEL	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY												SHOOTING	SCREEN						
Canon EOS 2000D	£469	3★	Minor update to EOS 1300D gains 24.1MP sensor	APS-C	24.1	Canon EF	12,800	1080		9	3	95	•	•	3			500	129	101.3	77.6	475
Canon EOS 250D	£530	4★	Very compact entry-level DSLR with fully articulated screen and 4K video	APS-C	24.1	Canon EF	51,200	3840	•	9	5	95	•	•	3	•	•	1070	122.4	92.6	69.8	449
Canon EOS 850D	£820	4★	Fully featured upper entry-level DSLR includes 4K video recording	APS-C	24.1	Canon EF	51,200	3840	•	45	7	95	•	•	3	•	•	800	131	102.6	76.2	515
Canon EOS 90D	£1210	4★	Mid-range DSLR boasts 32.5MP sensor, 10fps shooting and 4K video	APS-C	32.5	Canon EF	51,200	3840	•	45	10	100	•	•	3	•	•	1300	140.7	104.8	76.8	701
Canon EOS 6D Mark II	£1999	4.5★	Includes 26.2MP full-frame sensor and fully articulated screen	FF	26.2	Canon EF	102,400	1080	•	45	6.5	98	•	•	3	•	•	1,200	144	110.5	74.8	765
Canon EOS 5D Mark IV	£3599	4.5★	Hugely accomplished workhorse model, but pricey	FF	30.4	Canon EF	102,400	3840	•	61	7	100	•	•	3.2	•	•	900	151	116	76	890
Canon EOS-1D X Mark III	£6499		Super-fast pro model for sports and action photographers	FF	20.1	Canon EF	819,200	5496	•	191	16	100	•	•	3.2	•	•	2,850	158	167.6	82.6	1440
Nikon D3500	£499	4★	Easy-to-use entry-level DSLR with Bluetooth connectivity	DX	24.2	Nikon F	25,600	1080		11	5	95	•	•	3			1,550	124	97	69.5	415
Nikon D5600	£800	4.5★	Excellent image quality and handling, plus Bluetooth connectivity	DX	24.1	Nikon F	25,600	1080	•	39	5	95	•	•	3.2	•	•	970	124	97	78	465
Nikon D7500	£1299	4.5★	Places the excellent sensor from the D500 into a smaller body	DX	20.9	Nikon F	1,640,000	3840	•	51	8	100	•	•	3.2	•	•	950	135.5	104	72.5	720
Nikon D500	£1729	5★	Probably the best DX-format DSLR ever, with remarkable autofocus	DX	20.9	Nikon F	1,640,000	3840	•	153	10	100	•	•	3.2	•	•	1,240	147	115	81	860
Nikon D780	£2199	5★	Superb all-rounder blends the best of DSLR and mirrorless technology	FX	24.5	Nikon F	204,800	3840	•	51	7	100	•	•	3.2	•	•	2,060	143.5	115.5	76	840
Nikon D850	£3499	5★	High speed and superb image quality make this the best DSLR yet	FX	45.7	Nikon F	102,400	3840	•	153	7	100	•	•	3.2	•	•	1,840	146	124	78.5	1005
Nikon D5	£5199		Nikon's top-end sports and action model for professionals	FX	20.8	Nikon F	3,280,000	3840	•	153	14	100		•	3.2	•	•	3,780	160	158.5	92	1405
Nikon D6	£6299		Latest pro-level high-speed sports camera boasts new AF system	FX	20.8	Nikon F	3,280,000	3840	•	105	14	100	•	•	3.2	•	•	3,580	160	163	92	1450
Pentax K-70	£600	4.5★	Solid performer with fully articulated screen and in-body stabilisation	APS-C	24.2	Pentax K	102,400	1080		11	6	100	•	•	3	•	•	410	125.5	93	74	688
Pentax KP	£1099	4★	Compact but well-specified DSLR with interchangeable hand-grips	APS-C	24.3	Pentax K	819,200	1080	•	27	7	100	•	•	3	•	•	390	131.5	101	76	703
Pentax K-3 III	£1899	4★	Highly specified but pricey APS-C DSLR that boasts a large viewfinder	APS-C	25.7	Pentax K	1,600,000	3840	•	101	12	100	•	•	3.2	•	•	800	134.5	103.5	73.5	820
Pentax K-1 II	£1799	4.5★	Well-featured full-frame DSLR that's excellent value for money	FF	36	Pentax K	819,200	1080	•	33	4.4	100	•	•	3.2	•	•	670	136.5	110	85.5	1010

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Compact cameras			SENSOR SIZE	RESOLUTION (MP)	LENS RANGE (mm equiv)	MAX ISO	VIDEO	MC INPUT	SHOOTING	SCREEN	BATTERY LIFE (SHOTS)	WIDTH (mm)	HEIGHT (mm)	DEPTH (mm)	WEIGHT (g)
NAME & MODEL	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY												
Canon G1 X Mark III	£1149	5 ★	Rewrites the rule book by fitting an APS-C sensor in a compact body			APS-C	24.2	24-72	25,600	1080	9	•	•	•	399
Canon G3 X	£799	3.5 ★	Long zoom range, but let down by slow shooting and no built-in EVF			1in	20.2	24-600	12,800	1080	•	5.9	•	•	733
Canon G5 X Mark II	£849	4 ★	Handles well and gives great image quality, but sluggish AF in low light			1in	20.2	24-120	25,600	3840	30	•	•	•	340
Canon G7 X Mark II	£549	4.5 ★	Pocketable body that handles well, with really useful zoom range			1in	20.1	24-100	12,800	1080	8	•	•	•	319
Canon G7 X Mark III	£699	4 ★	Lovely pocket camera that includes 4K video and YouTube live streaming			1in	20.1	24-100	25,600	3840	•	30	•	•	304
Canon G9 X Mark II	£449	4 ★	Slim, stylish, pocketable camera gives great image quality			1in	20.2	28-84	12,800	1080	8.2	•	•	•	206
Fujifilm X100V	£1299	5 ★	Classic rangefinder-like camera with tilting screen and weather-sealing			APS-C	26.1	35	51,200	3840	•	20	•	•	478
Leica C-Lux	£875		Customised, re-badged version of the Panasonic TZ200			1in	20.1	24-360	25,000	3840	10	•	•	•	340
Leica D-Lux 7	£1075		Customised, re-badged version of the Panasonic LX100 II			4/3	17	24-75	25,000	3840	11	•	•	•	392
Leica V-Lux 5	£1049		Customised, re-badged version of the Panasonic FZ1000 II			1in	20.1	25-400	25,000	3840	•	12	•	•	812
Leica Q2	£4250		Update to the Q with high-resolution sensor and weather-sealed body			FF	47.3	28	50,000	4096	20	•	•	•	718
Leica Q2 Monochrom	£4995	5 ★	Variant of the Q2 with a modified sensor that only shoots in black & white			FF	47.3	28	100,000	4096	20	•	•	•	734
Panasonic FZ1000 II	£700	4 ★	Updates FZ1000 with higher-resolution, touch-sensitive screen			1in	20.1	25-400	25,600	3840	•	12	•	•	810
Panasonic FZ2000	£600	4.5 ★	Sophisticated bridge camera with strong focus on 4K video			1in	20.1	24-480	25,600	3840	•	12	•	•	966
Panasonic LX15	£370	4.5 ★	Likeable advanced compact with ultra-fast f/1.4-2.8 zoom lens			1in	20.1	24-72	25,600	3840	10	•	•	•	310
Panasonic LX100 II	£600	4.5 ★	Fine camera with Four Thirds sensor, fast lens and analogue controls			4/3	17	24-75	25,600	3840	11	•	•	•	392
Panasonic TZ100	£350	4.5 ★	Long zoom lens in pocket-sized body makes for a fine travel camera			1in	20.1	25-250	25,600	3840	10	•	•	•	312
Panasonic TZ200	£500	4.5 ★	Huge zoom range for a pocket camera, but telephoto images lack detail			1in	20.1	24-360	25,600	3840	10	•	•	•	340
Ricoh GR III	£799	4 ★	Slimline, lightweight advanced compact with in-body image stabilisation			APS-C	24.2	28	102,400	1920	4	•	•	•	257
Ricoh GR IIIx	£899		Variant of the GR III with new 40mm-equivalent f/2.8 lens			APS-C	24.2	40	102,400	1920	4	•	•	•	262
Sony RX0 II	£730		Tough waterproof camera with tilting screen and internal 4K video recording			1in	15.3	24	12,800	3840	•	16	•	•	132
Sony RX10 IV	£1800	5 ★	Update to RX10 III with vastly improved shooting speed and autofocus			1in	20.1	24-600	12,800	3840	•	24	•	•	1095
Sony RX100 III	£810	5 ★	Features fast f/1.8-2.8 zoom lens and pop-up electronic viewfinder			1in	20.1	24-70	12,800	1920	10	•	•	•	290
Sony RX100 V	£900	4.5 ★	Includes super-fast 24fps shooting and slow-motion video up to 960fps			1in	20.1	24-70	12,800	3840	24	•	•	•	299
Sony RX100 VI	£980	4.5 ★	Fantastic pocket travel camera with 24-200mm equivalent f/2.8-4 lens			1in	20.1	24-200	12,800	3840	24	•	•	•	301
Sony RX100 VII	£1200	4.5 ★	Gains Sony's latest AI-based autofocus tech, including real-time eye AF			1in	20.1	24-200	12,800	3840	•	20	•	•	302
Sony ZV-1	£700	4 ★	Designed for vloggers, with high-spec mic and fully articulated screen			1in	20.1	25-70	12,800	3840	•	24	•	•	294
Zeiss ZX1	£5400	3 ★	Unique camera with built-in Lightroom Mobile, but awkward touch interface			FF	27.4	35	51,200	3840	3	•	•	•	837

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Final Analysis

Damien Demolder considers...

Ukrainians attend an open military training for civilians, Kyiv, Ukraine, by Sergei Chuzavkov, 2022

The idea that no one likes a bully just isn't true. Confusing volume and violence for great leadership and vision, so many seem drawn to them. A desire to be on the winning side, to get one's own way and to demonstrate 'strength' and decisiveness can often, it appears, cloud judgement and paper over 'minor' injustices for the good of the end.

It isn't true either that we all root for the underdog. Perhaps when the underdog is labelled as such we might, but being the underdog can just as easily be seen as a sign of weakness, the result of poor decisions and downright laziness. Some people like to get behind an underdog, to encourage them, and to cheer them on against the odds. That's why we love the FA Cup, because Preston Both Ends have a chance of beating Manchester City – and that makes us all excited.

Others like an underdog to kick. They think it will make them feel better.

When underdogs turn to bite the leg of the aggressor, and when bullies get what's coming to them the internet likes to drop in an #instantkarma hashtag, lolz, shares and it moves on – the episode consumed. That's usually the end of the matter, perhaps with little thought to what went before or what happened next.

When I chose this picture to write about, the conflict in Ukraine hadn't yet turned into a war. Putin was telling the world he wasn't going to invade, but it was becoming quite clear to that same world that he was. It had been planned for much longer than most realised.

Ukraine is a pretty big country by our standards, though its population is somewhat smaller than ours, but it's a minnow in comparison to its neighbour Russia. Although the Ukrainian army is also pretty large, Russia has 4.6 active military personnel for every opposite number across the border, and a whole lot more in reserve. By any measure Ukraine is the underdog in this situation.

If it is possible for a picture to spell out the definition of 'underdog' in a way that



we all understand in a split second then this photograph by Kyiv-based photographer Sergei Chuzavkov is it. A veteran of Ukraine's turbulent recent history, Chuzavkov has brought us close-up views of the country, its culture and its politics for a number of years. He covered Tony Blair's meeting with the poisoned Yushchenko after the Orange Revolution in 2005, the braided plaits of Yulia Tymoshenko, fisticuffs in parliament over Russian-language speeches, as well as the annexation of regions in the east of the country. He has been prolific and ever-present in the thick of the action.

This particular picture is captioned 'Ukrainians attend an open military training for civilians range as part of the "Don't panic! Get ready!" in Kyiv amid the threat of Russian invasion.' What struck me at first glance about this training program for Ukrainian citizens was that they were running around with wooden guns in preparation for meeting the metallic might of Russia. Then it sunk in

that they didn't even have enough wooden guns to go around, so this man had to use a log instead, and pretend it was a pretend gun.

On one hand this could be a picture of desperation that induces our pity. On the other it shows the will and spirit of the people, and a determination to overcome their underdog image. The country has been haunted by Russia for decades, with ambition breathing down its neck. It isn't about to give in – no matter how unlikely the odds. Since this picture was taken we've seen determination, will and spirit as civilians mix Molotov cocktails and take up machine guns to repel their unwelcome guests. They are doing it – taking action.

By the time this magazine comes out of course, the situation may have changed and things could have gone either way. It's all unpredictable, but whatever the outcome Chuzavkov's picture has shown us a courage, a character and a determination to overcome – a dogged underdog – that we can admire. How would we behave were we them?

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Photographer and journalist Damien Demolder has worked in the photographic publishing industry since 1997 and is the former editor of *Amateur Photographer*. He writes regularly about photography for a number of leading publications and has also been a judge on a number of prestigious international photo competitions. See his website at www.damiendemolder.com.



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