

"The Beginner Buyer's Guide To Digital Cameras, Or The Ins And Outs Of Megapixels."

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By Warren Lynch

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The Beginners buyer's guide to digital cameras or The Ins and Outs of Megapixels.

By Warren Lynch <http://www.wlynch.com>

The most important part of buying a digital camera is making sure that the one you select meets all of your needs.

Digital Camera 101

Better digital cameras uses a chip called a "Charged Coupled Device" (CCD) instead of film. Light enters the camera, through the open shutter, and strikes the CCD where it is converted to digital data before being stored in the camera's memory.

While that is the simple description, things can get pretty complicated from there.

Megapixels & Resolution

Resolution is a measure of how many pixels are used to make a digital copy of an image. Pixels are tiny dots of light that make up a digital image.

The quality of a digital camera's image is usually measured in 'Megapixels' where each megapixel represents one million pixels.

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Here's how to determine how many megapixels you'll need depending upon the type of photos you will be taking and what you intend to do with them.

### 1 megapixel

Almost obsolete, you might still find these in cell phones, PDAs, and desktop "web" cameras. They're OK if you only intend to email pictures to other people and those people aren't going to be printing them.

### 1.1 to 2 megapixels

Only slightly better than the 1.0, this resolution is OK for an average

4x6 snapshot, but it isn't going to be a production quality image.

### 2.1 to 3 megapixels

This is the beginning of the decent camera range. You get very good 4x6 images and reasonably good 5x7 images. These cameras are low cost and provide a good platform for beginners.

### 3.1 to 4 megapixels

You are qualified to say that you have a "pretty good" camera. You get professional quality 4x6 images, real good 5x7 and 6x9 shots, and somewhat decent, but not great 8x10 images.

### 4.1 to 5 megapixels and up

People will be saying "Hey, great pictures!". You can count on professional images all the way up to 8x10's. Of course, as the megapixel count goes up, so does the price.

If you are only going to be viewing your pictures online, such as posting them at a photo site or using them on your web pages, keep your money in your pocket and pick yourself up something in the 1.5 megapixel range.

If you will be shooting pictures that will be printed at a print house, such as for brochures, postcards, etc, then you will need at least a 5 megapixel camera if not higher. Of course, you'll also need to have a fat wallet or a lot of open to buy on your credit card because, even though prices are steadily falling, these puppies aren't cheap!

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Once you've solved the megapixel puzzle, the rest of a digital camera's features, such as lens types, storage capacity and shutter speed are pretty routine and easy to understand. You shouldn't have a problem deciding on those features.

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### **Types Of Digital Cameras**

#### **By Amber Lowery**

#### Types of Digital Cameras

If you are in the market to purchase a digital camera, you have surely seen several different types of cameras. It isn't exactly clear what the differences between the types are, and it can be confusing trying to choose the digital camera that's right for you. In this article, we will discuss the different types of cameras so that you can better understand what to look for in purchasing a digital camera.

**Point and Shoot Digital Cameras** Most consumer cameras on the market today fall into the category of Point and Shoot digital cameras. These cameras usually provide resolutions of between 2 and 4 megapixels (million pixels). These cameras are the digital version of your typical 35mm consumer camera.

A point and shoot digital camera is designed to do just that – take snapshots. They provide limited flexibility with options, although many newer models have some limited options for special effects. The image quality from a point and shoot digital camera is generally good enough for common uses, such as auction photos, and even 4 X 6 prints.

If you just want a standard, entry level digital camera for family snapshots and auction photos, then a point and shoot digital camera is a budget conscious choice.

**Semi Professional Digital Cameras** A semi professional digital camera is a more advanced version of a point and shoot digital camera. Typically, these cameras provide resolutions between 5 and 6 megapixels (million pixels). They also often offer the user additional settings and greater control over the camera. The image quality of these cameras is good enough to produce clear prints up to about 8 x

10.

A semi professional digital camera may be the best option for you if you seek greater creative control than you can get with a point and shoot model. The increased flexibility does come with a price. Most semi professional models are priced much higher than point and shoot models.

**Digital SLR Cameras** If you are a serious or professional photographer, no less than a Digital SLR model will do. SLR stands for Single Lens Reflex. Digital SLR cameras are very similar in operation to their 35 mm SLR counterparts. Also, many camera companies (such as Cannon and Nikon) have built their digital SLR models to be compatible with 35 mm SLR lenses. This is a great benefit to professional photographers who can select a model that is compatible with their existing lenses.

Digital SLR cameras provide an amazing ammount of creative control over the camera and the resuting images. Also, these cameras provide resolutions over 6 Megapixels and can produce prints of poster size without noticable pixelazation.

A Digital SLR camera (without lenses) is a pricey investment indeed. Currently, you can expect to spend \$1500 or more on the camera alone. Accessories and lenses cost extra.

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