

TOP 10 PRO DIGITAL CAMERAS & DIGITAL VIDEO CAMERAS

		Pro digital cameras	Actual sensor	Optical zoom Equivalent range	Max aperture	Viewfinder type LCD size	Shutter speeds	Storage media Supplied media	Closest focus distance (macro)	Accessories
	1 Sony Cybershot DSC-F717 08705 111 999 www.sony.co.uk LAST MONTH 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £900 ex VAT • 1-year warranty • 659g inc battery • First review Dec 02 	5Mp	5x 38-190mm	f2.0-2.4	EVF 1.8in	1/2,000 to 30 sec	Memory Stick 32MB	2cm	Hotshoe, sync plug
			Sony's DSC-F717 is the best-quality 5Mp (megapixel) camera we've tested. The optics are superb and features like the live histogram and AF illuminator are wonderful. The relatively high cost and low capacity of Memory Sticks let it down, but the F717 remains one of the best digital cameras at this price point.							
	2 Nikon Coolpix 5000 0800 230 220 www.nikon.co.uk LAST MONTH 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £680 ex VAT • 1-year warranty • 414g inc battery • First review Jul 02 	5Mp	3x 28-85mm	f2.8-4.8	optical 1.8in	1/2,000 to 60 sec	CompactFlash 32MB	2cm	Hotshoe
			The compact 5Mp Nikon delivers 2,560x1,920 pixel images. Its CompactFlash card stores 20 high-resolution Jpegs. The 3x optical zoom has an equivalent range of 28-85mm, giving much wider-angle shots, the macro focuses at 2cm and there's a range of manual and automatic settings.							
	3 Nikon Coolpix 5700 0800 230 220 www.nikon.co.uk LAST MONTH 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £850 ex VAT • 1-year warranty • 512g inc battery • First review Oct 02 	5Mp	8x 35-280mm	f2.8-4.2	EVF 1.5in	1/4,000 to 8 sec	CompactFlash 32MB	3cm	Hotshoe
			The Coolpix 5700 boasts a 5Mp CCD (charge-coupled device), flip-out and twist screen and a 32MB card which stores up to 20 best-quality Jpegs. Its 8x optical zoom is equivalent in coverage to 35-280mm, which makes it top dog for focal length among 5Mp cameras.							
	4 Olympus Camedia E10 0800 072 0070 www.olympus.co.uk LAST MONTH 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £850 ex VAT • 1-year warranty • 1,170g inc battery • First review Jul 02 	4Mp	4x 35-140mm	f2.0-2.4	SLR 1.8in	1/640 to 8 sec	CompactFlash 16MB	20cm	Hotshoe, sync plug
			The 4Mp E10 has an optical SLR (single lens reflex) viewfinder, which allows more precise focusing. Images have 2,240x1,680 pixels and make great-looking 11x8in inkjet prints. The 4x optical zoom is equivalent to 35-140mm and zooming is performed by twisting a mechanical ring on the lens.							
	5 Canon EOS-D60 0800 616 417 www.canon.co.uk LAST MONTH 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £1,872 ex VAT • 1-year warranty • 855g body only • First review Sep 02 	6.3Mp	any Canon EOS lens	dependent on lens	SLR 1.8in	1/4,000 to 30 sec	CompactFlash none	dependent on lens	Hotshoe, sync plug
			The D60 uses Canon's vast range of EF 35mm lenses although, like most digital SLR devices, their effective focal length is multiplied 1.6 times. It boasts 6.3Mp resolution, delivering images good enough for A3 inkjet prints. However, it doesn't come with any storage card.							

		Digital video cameras	Image processor	CCD	Optical digital zoom	Max aperture	Horizontal DV resolution	FireWire in out	Focal distance	Multi-media card
	1 JVC GR-DVL767EK 0870 330 5000 www.jvc.co.uk LAST MONTH 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £680 ex VAT • 1-year warranty • 567g • First review Dec 02 	1/3.8in CCD	1.02Mp	10x 500x	1.8	530 lines	yes yes	3.8-38mm	8MB
			This model is comfortable in use with easy-reach controls. A side-loading tape mechanism is convenient when shooting on a tripod and the 10x optical zoom is smooth. It can capture stills and store them on an 8MB multimedia card. But what tips the balance is the comprehensive range of connectivity options.							
	2 Sony DCR-TRV18E 0870 511 1999 www.sony.co.uk LAST MONTH 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £454 ex VAT • 1-year warranty • 705g • First review Jul 02 	1/4in CCD	680,000 pixels	10x 120x	1.7	500 lines	no yes	3.3-33mm	8MB
			The Sony combines excellent performance with professional extras. It offers a 10x optical and 120x digital zoom, both of which provide sharp results. It's comfortable in use and can capture stills via the 680,000 pixel CCD and stores them on its 8MB Memory Stick.							
	3 Samsung VPD77i 0800 521 652 www.samsungelectronics.co.uk LAST MONTH 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £495 ex VAT • 1-year warranty • 590g • First review Oct 02 	1.4in CCD	800,000 pixels	22x 500x	1.6	500 lines	yes yes	3.6-79.2mm	8MB
			Compact and ergonomic, the VPD77i offers a side-loading tape mechanism and easy-to-operate controls. The fold-out LCD (liquid crystal display) lacks clarity and detail, but it can capture sharp images and is suited to shooting in low-light conditions. Using the digital zoom can lead to fuzzy image quality.							
	4 Canon MV550i 0870 514 3723 www.canon.co.uk LAST MONTH 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £680 ex VAT • 1-year warranty • 530g • First review Jul 02 	1/6in CCD	540,000 pixels	22x 440x	1.8	500 lines	yes yes	2.8-61.6mm	8MB
			The MV550i has plenty of features – but these are matched by a high price. It also misses out some key requirements: image quality lacks detail and appears drained, and the auto-exposure also coped badly during transitions from low to bright light.							
	5 Panasonic NV-DS29B 08705 357 357 www.panasonic.co.uk LAST MONTH 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £499 ex VAT • 1-year warranty • 510g • First review Sep 02 	1/4in CCD	800,000 pixels	10x 500x	1.8	500 lines	no yes	3.6-36mm	n/a
			The NV-DS29B failed to impress, despite its bargain price. Image quality was good and the zoom facilities are smooth. But there's a serious lack of features: there are no special effects other than the ability to fade between shots and it only offers a DV-out port.							

Buying advice: professional digital cameras

When you're paying over £700 for a digital camera you expect to get a good product in return. Obviously if you pay up to £2,000 you can find models in excess of 7Mp (megapixels). Around the £1,000 mark you should expect a 5Mp CCD (charge-coupled device). Professional digital cameras cover all aspects of

photography. You can set most cameras to automatic but anyone willing to pay this much money for a camera wants total control over their photography.

Even at this high price point we're still seeing a pitiable amount of storage bundled with cameras, with manufacturers expecting consumers to pay out for better cards. Standard storage is 32MB but the higher the megapixels the fewer shots you

can get on a storage card so you'll need much more than this to truly get the best out of your camera. A 4x or 5x optical zoom is reasonable, but shop around and you might track down an 8x optical zoom.

In terms of bundled extras, rechargeable lithium batteries with an adapter and decent software are standard on Professional cameras – opt for Adobe's Photoshop Elements if you can.