











TOP 10 PROFESSIONAL AND BEGINNER DIGITAL CAMERAS

Professional digital cameras											
Details	Last month's position	First reviewed	Price (ex VAT)	Warranty	Megapixel rating	Optical/digital zoom	Max aperture	Shutter speeds (in 1/3 stop increments)	Storage media type/capacity	Dimensions (widthxdepth xheight)	Weight
 1 Canon PowerShot G2 0800 616 417 www.canon.co.uk	1	Jan 02	£637	1-year	4Mp	3.6x/11x	f/2.0-f/2.5	1/1,000-15in	CompactFlash/32MB	121x77x64mm	425g
 2 FujiFilm FinePix 6900 Zoom 020 7586 1477 www.fujifilm.co.uk	2	Dec 01	£680	1-year	6Mp (3.3Mp true)	6x/4.43x	f/2.8-f/3.1	1/1,000-3in	SmartMedia/16MB	110x94x79mm	410g
 3 Sony CyberShot DSC-75 0990 111 999 www.sony.co.uk	3	Aug 01	£595	1-year	3.3Mp	3x/2x	f/2.0-f/2.5	1/1,000-8in	SmartMedia/8MB	117x71x64mm	462g
 4 Sony CyberShot DSC-P5 0990 111 999 www.sony.co.uk	4	Jan 02	£510	1-year	3.2Mp	3x/2x	f/2.8-f/5.6	N/A	SmartMedia/8MB	105x56x36mm	180g
 5 Olympus Camedia C-4040 Zoom 0800 072 0070 www.olympus.com	5	Dec 01	£681	1-year	4.13Mp	3x/7.5x	f/1.8-f/2.6	1/800-4in	SmartMedia/16MB	110x70x76mm	320g

Beginner digital cameras											
Details	Last month's position	First reviewed	Price (ex VAT)	Warranty	Megapixel rating	Optical/digital zoom	Storage media type/capacity	Optical viewfinder	Low/high resolution capacity	Dimensions (widthxdepth xheight)	Weight
 1 Pentax Optio 330 01753 792 731 www.pentax.co.uk	1	Jan 02	£412	1-year	3.34Mp	3x/2x	CompactFlash/16MB	LCD, optical	228/10	92x31x59mm	205g
 2 Kyocera FineCam S3 01189 356 300 www.finecam.com	2	Dec 01	£454	1-year	3.34Mp	2x/2x	Secure Digital/16MB	LCD, optical	64/9	30x55x87mm	165g
 3 Kodak EasyShare DX3900 Zoom 0870 243 0270 www.kodak.co.uk	3	Dec 01	£371	1-year	3.1Mp	2x/3x	CompactFlash/8MB	LCD, optical	23/7	116x42x67mm	225g
 4 Ricoh Caplio RR10 020 8261 4000 www.ricoh.co.uk	4	Jan 02	£372	1-year	2.1Mp	2x/2x	Secure Digital/8MB	LCD, optical	62/8	117x30x54mm	172g
 5 Nikon CoolPix 885 0800 230 220 www.nikon.co.uk	5	Jan 02	£454	1-year	3.21Mp	3x/4x	CompactFlash/16MB	LCD, optical	324/6	95x52x69mm	231g

TOP 10 PROFESSIONAL DIGITAL CAMERAS

1 Canon PowerShot G2

 The PowerShot G2 wins the Best Buy award for the second month running. Canon targets its digital camera at the serious photographer. In addition to the automatic exposure mode, there's a choice of aperture, shutter speed priority or full manual exposure.


A high-resolution CCD (charge-coupled device) and good lens are essential for the serious user and we were not disappointed with the Canon PowerShot G2. The 4Mp (megapixel) CCD lets you capture images up to a maximum resolution of 2,272x1,704, while the 3.6x optical zoom lens is of a high quality. The Canon is less bulky than an SLR (single lens reflex) camera, but it isn't in the same league as the ultra-compact, such as the Sony DSC-P5.

If you aspire to more than snapshot photography, but don't want to carry an SLR-type digital camera around, the PowerShot G2 is worthy of consideration.



TOP 10 BEGINNER DIGITAL CAMERAS

1 Pentax Optio 330

 Pentax is a relative newcomer to the digital camera market and in the past we haven't been all that impressed with its offerings. However, this time round it has got it right and effortlessly hangs on to the Best Buy award for another month.

The Pentax Optio 330 has a robust metal body and boasts a 3x optical zoom. It offers three main shooting settings on the jog-dial and the simple menu system offers plenty of configurations for various photographic conditions. Pentax has even added manual focus, night shooting and a dioptre adjustment lever to get clear shots through the viewfinder for anyone who wears glasses.

Its fast reactions, from picture playback to the near-instantaneous image capture, make it a joy to use. The Optio 330 is a compact and low-cost camera, winning the coveted Best Buy award thanks to a low price and good features.



TOP 10 PROFESSIONAL DIGITAL CAMERAS

2 FujiFilm FinePix 6900 Zoom

 FujiFilm manages to extract 6Mp (megapixels) from the FinePix 6900 Zoom, thanks to its octagonal CCD (charge-coupled device) elements. This provides a level of detail previously unavailable at this price. Image quality also depends on the quality of the lens and we have no complaints here. However, the maximum aperture of f/2.8 is disappointing. FujiFilm has abandoned gimmicky features, such as swivel lenses and fold-out LCD screens. Instead, it concentrates on ergonomics, so the 6900 Zoom is a joy to hold and use.



3 Sony CyberShot DSC-75

The CyberShot DSC-75 is a go-anywhere camera, but this doesn't mean that it falls short in terms of features. Rarely will you get the ultimate in picture quality with a compact camera, and the Sony is about average. With a 3.3Mp (megapixel) CCD (charge-coupled device) and a good lens, though, its performance is respectable. What's more, the compact design doesn't mean that you have to sacrifice control. You can operate the DSC-75 as a point-and-shoot camera, but there's still plenty of scope for creativity.



4 Sony CyberShot DSC-P5

The DSC-P5 provides a reasonable level of performance, while being small and light enough to slip in your pocket. A lack of features is the price you pay for those tiny dimensions – this is the only Professional camera in our digital camera chart to only offer programmed automatic exposure. The Sony DSC-P5 is basically a high-end point-and-shoot camera.



5 Olympus Camedia C-4040 Zoom

The Olympus Camedia C-4040 Zoom is a compact device, but you'll never get a good zoom range with a camera that fits in your pocket. That said, the C-4040 doesn't skimp on functionality. It gains top marks for its CCD (charge-coupled device) resolution, which clocks up 4.13Mp (megapixels). The lens is of a high standard, and it has a large f/1.8 aperture.



TOP 10 BEGINNER DIGITAL CAMERAS

2 Kyocera FineCam S3

 Kyocera's FineCam S3 packs loads of features into its tiny case. At 165g the FineCam is the lightest camera in the chart, but packs plenty of photographic punch. The robust all-metal chassis houses a 3.34Mp (megapixel) CCD (charge-coupled device) and uses a 16MB Secure Digital card for storage. With a top resolution of 2,048x1,536, the S3 can hold nine high-resolution photos or 64 images on a respectable resolution of 1,024x768. Quality is impressive with good colour saturation and crisp images.



3 Kodak EasyShare DX3900 Zoom

Kodak's EasyShare DX3900 Zoom has a 3.1Mp (megapixel) CCD (charge-coupled device) and an 8MB CompactFlash card, which can store seven high-quality shots. While there's no 'Save as Tiff' option, you can choose a high-compression mode when shooting at 3.1Mp. Everything about the DX3900 is designed to make digital photography as easy as possible. Installation is fully automated and the menu system is comprehensive. Novices are certainly the target market for the EasyShare DX3900 Zoom, so if you want more advanced features look elsewhere.



4 Ricoh Caplio RR10

Digital cameras that offer MP3, webcam, movie and sound capabilities are normally low-end jack-of-all-trades devices, so we were surprised to see the quality offered by the Ricoh Caplio RR10. With a 2.1Mp (megapixel) CCD (charge-coupled device) it offers decent photography and the budget price is remarkably generous, considering the whole package. Given the amount of functionality contained in the brushed metal case, it's also to Ricoh's credit that it has kept the dimensions so slinky.



5 Nikon CoolPix 885

The Nikon CoolPix 885 is an update of the 880, with rounded contours and a more compact chassis. The 3.21Mp (megapixel) CCD (charge-coupled device) means good image quality, while a 16MB CompactFlash card holds six high-resolution Jpegs. With a 3x optical and a 4x digital zoom the 885 has the best capabilities in the Beginner digital cameras chart, but it's also one of the most expensive devices.

