






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 (widthxdepthxheight)	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	1/1,000-15 seconds	CompactFlash/32MB	121x77x64mm	425g
 2 Sony CyberShot DSC-75 0990 111 999 www.sony.co.uk	3	Aug 01	£495	1-year	3.3Mp	3x/2x	f/2.0-f/2.5	1/1,000-8 seconds	SmartMedia/8MB	117x71x64mm	462g
3 Sony CyberShot DSC-P5 0990 111 999 www.sony.co.uk	4	Jan 02	£455	1-year	3.2Mp	3x/2x	f/2.8-f/5.6	N/A	SmartMedia/8MB	105x56x36mm	180g
4 FujiFilm FinePix 6900 Zoom 020 7586 1477 www.fujifilm.co.uk	2	Dec 01	£659	1-year	6Mp (3.3Mp true)	6x/4.43x	f/2.8-f/3.1	1/1,000-3 seconds	SmartMedia/16MB	110x94x79mm	410g
5 Pentax Optio 430 01753 792 731 www.pentax.co.uk	NEW	Apr 02	£576	1-year	4Mp	3x/2x	f/2.6-f/4.8	1/2,000-2 seconds	CompactFlash/16MB	92x31x59mm	205g

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 (widthxdepthxheight)	Weight
 1 Canon PowerShot S40 0800 616 417 www.canon.co.uk	1	Mar 02	£469	1-year	4Mp	3x/11x	CompactFlash/16MB	LCD, optical	165/4	112x42x58mm	260g
 2 Pentax Optio 330 01753 792 731 www.pentax.co.uk	2	Jan 02	£412	1-year	3.34Mp	3x/2x	CompactFlash/16MB	LCD, optical	228/10	92x31x59mm	205g
3 Kyocera FineCam S3 01189 356 300 www.finecam.com	3	Dec 01	£454	1-year	3.34Mp	2x/2x	Secure Digital/16MB	LCD, optical	64/9	30x55x87mm	165g
4 Kodak EasyShare DX3900 Zoom 0870 243 0270 www.kodak.co.uk	4	Dec 01	£371	1-year	3.1Mp	2x/3x	CompactFlash/8MB	LCD, optical	23/7	116x42x67mm	225g
5 Ricoh Caplio RR10 020 8261 4000 www.ricoh.co.uk	5	Jan 02	£372	1-year	2.1Mp	2x/2x	Secure Digital/8MB	LCD, optical	62/8	117x30x54mm	172g

TOP 10 PROFESSIONAL DIGITAL CAMERAS

1 Canon PowerShot G2

 The PowerShot G2 wins the Best Buy award in the Professional chart for the fourth month running. Canon has targeted this 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 captures images up to a maximum resolution of 2,272x1,704dpi (dots per inch), 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.

→ Turn to page 116 to continue the Top 10 Professional digital cameras chart



TOP 10 BEGINNER DIGITAL CAMERAS

1 Canon PowerShot S40

 Is it possible for Canon to combine a decent specification, portability and low price in a digital camera? Yes it is, and the highly versatile PowerShot S40 – our Best Buy – is the proof. It's compact, reasonably priced, laden with features and produces high-quality images. The S40 isn't as ergonomically satisfying as some of the more rounded models, but it's robust and comfortable to hold. The 4Mp (megapixel) CCD (charge-coupled device) provides a maximum resolution of 2,272x1,704dpi (dots per inch). With video and audio capture taking up precious storage space, you'll need to pay out for a better-endowed flash card – the bundled 16MB CompactFlash card only holds 165 low-resolution or four maximum-resolution shots. The PowerShot's image quality is excellent, operation is fast and the control system is intuitive. It's Windows XP-compatible, can be plugged into a Canon BubbleJet printer via the USB cable and has an optional underwater case. → Turn to page 116 to continue the Top 10 Beginner digital cameras chart



TOP 10 PROFESSIONAL DIGITAL CAMERAS

2 Sony CyberShot DSC-75

 The CyberShot DSC-75 wins a Recommended award this month due to a drop in its price. The CyberShot is a go-anywhere camera, but it doesn't fall short in terms of features. Rarely will you get ultimate 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. You can operate the DSC-75 as a point-and-shoot camera, but there's still plenty of scope for creativity.



3 Sony CyberShot DSC-P5

A price change also spells good fortune for the DSC-P5, which moves up a spot this month. The P5 provides a decent 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 Top 10 chart to just offer programmed automatic exposure. The DSC-P5 is basically a high-end, point-and-shoot camera, but the relatively low price tag means that this offers great value for your money.



4 FujiFilm FinePix 6900 Zoom

FujiFilm loses its Recommended award this month due to the Sony CyberShots' price changes. However, FujiFilm manages to extract 6Mp (megapixel) from the FinePix 6900 Zoom, thanks to its octagonal CCD (charge-coupled device) elements. 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 concentrated on ergonomics, making the 6900 Zoom a joy to hold and use.



5 Pentax Optio 430

The Optio 430 is little more than an upgrade from the 330 in our Beginner chart. The CCD (charge-coupled device) is an impressive 4Mp. The 1.6in LCD screen is small but sharp and, despite the wealth of features, it's simple to navigate. Serious users may be disappointed that there's no aperture or shutter priority, but will be impressed by the 3x optical zoom and smooth 2x digital zoom.



TOP 10 BEGINNER DIGITAL CAMERAS

2 Pentax Optio 330

 Pentax is a relative newcomer to the digital camera market, and in the past we haven't been that impressed with its offerings. However, the Pentax Optio 330 has changed our mind. It's an excellent camera that deserves its Recommended award, thanks to its robust metal body and 3x optical zoom. The Optio offers three main shooting settings on the jog-dial and the simple menu system offers configurations for various photographic conditions. It even has manual focus and night shooting. Its fast reactions, from picture playback to image capture, make it a joy to use.



3 Kyocera FineCam S3

Kyocera has loaded features into the FineCam's tiny case. The lightest camera in the Top 10 chart, the S3 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 2,048x1,536dpi (dots per inch), the S3 can hold nine high-resolution photos or 64 images on a respectable resolution of 1,024x768dpi. Quality is impressive with good colour saturation and crisp images.



4 Kodak EasyShare DX3900 Zoom

Kodak's EasyShare 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 easy: installation is fully automated and the menu system is comprehensive. Novices are certainly the target market for the DX3900 Zoom, so look elsewhere for more advanced features.



5 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 of 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. Indeed, despite the amount of functionality the Caplio has packed in, it remains a neat, pocket-sized camera.

