











# TOP 10 BEGINNER & INTERMEDIATE DIGITAL CAMERAS

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                          | Beginner digital cameras                                                                                       | Mega-pixel rating | Max resolution | Optical Digital zoom | Movie Sound | File format   | Storage media type<br>Battery/rechargeable | High/low res storage capacity | Dimensions (wx dxh)<br>Weight | Software includes                |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------|----------------------|-------------|---------------|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |   | <b>Olympus MJU 300</b><br>0800 072 0070<br><a href="http://www.olympus.com">www.olympus.com</a><br><b>NEW</b>                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• £288</li><li>• 1-year warranty</li><li>• First review Jul 03</li></ul> | 3.2Mp             | 2,048 x1,536   | 3x<br>4x             | yes<br>no   | JPG           | 16MB xD card<br>1 x lithium/yes            | 6/94                          | 99x34x56mm<br>165g            | Camedia Master 4.1               |
| The MJU 300 offers a great combination of style and substance at an attractive price and it couldn't be easier to get to grips with. Shot quality is impressive for such a compact model – especially outdoor pictures. If you want a sturdy digital camera to accompany you on your travels then this is ideal.                |                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                |                   |                |                      |             |               |                                            |                               |                               |                                  |
| 2                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |   | <b>Fujifilm FinePix F401 Zoom</b><br>020 7586 1477<br><a href="http://www.fujifilm.co.uk">www.fujifilm.co.uk</a><br><b>LAST MONTH 2</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• £255</li><li>• 1-year warranty</li><li>• First review Jan 03</li></ul> | 2.1Mp             | 2,304 x1,728   | 3x<br>3.6x           | yes<br>yes  | JPG, AVI      | 16MB SmartMedia<br>1 x NP-60 lithium/yes   | 9/122                         | 85x28x69mm<br>185g            | FinePix Viewer, Video Impression |
| The compact, stylish F401 offers superb functionality and good picture quality, while the generous software bundle includes QuickTime and Video Impression. Its pixel range of 2.1Mp is upped to 4Mp thanks to Super CCD technology. This is without the aid of interpolation so photos aren't suffused with unnatural colours. |                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                |                   |                |                      |             |               |                                            |                               |                               |                                  |
| 3                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |   | <b>Olympus Camedia C-300 Luxury Pack</b><br>0800 072 0070<br><a href="http://www.olympus.com">www.olympus.com</a><br><b>LAST MONTH 1</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• £298</li><li>• 1-year warranty</li><li>• First review Jan 03</li></ul> | 3Mp               | 1,984 x1,488   | 2.8x<br>3.6x         | yes<br>no   | JPG, TIF      | 96MB SmartMedia<br>4 x NiMH/yes            | 30/663                        | 118x50x66mm<br>240g           | Camedia Master 4.0               |
| The Olympus Camedia offers good features and an impressive specification list, although its price could be lower. Designed with ease of use in mind, it is a responsive model that processes images quickly and has enough features to appease buyers looking for more than a point-and-shoot snapper.                          |                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                |                   |                |                      |             |               |                                            |                               |                               |                                  |
| 4                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |   | <b>Ricoh Caplio RR30</b><br>020 8261 4031<br><a href="http://www.ricohpmmc.com">www.ricohpmmc.com</a><br><b>LAST MONTH 3</b>             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• £231</li><li>• 1-year warranty</li><li>• First review Jan 03</li></ul> | 3.2Mp             | 2,048 x1,536   | 3x<br>3.4x           | yes<br>no   | JPG, TIF, AVI | 8MB internal flash<br>2 x AA alkaline/no   | 5/52                          | 114x55x33mm<br>160g           | Ricoh Gate L                     |
| The RR30 has a loud motor but the quick-access buttons and features make up for it. Offering plenty of megapixels for your money, shots are incredibly detailed. It's just a shame that the TIF option only works in mono. Two non-rechargeable AA cells come with the Caplio, but it does support rechargeable lithium ones.   |                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                |                   |                |                      |             |               |                                            |                               |                               |                                  |
| 5                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |  | <b>Kodak CX4210</b><br>0870 243 0270<br><a href="http://www.kodak.co.uk">www.kodak.co.uk</a><br><b>LAST MONTH 5</b>                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• £123</li><li>• 1-year warranty</li><li>• First review Jan 03</li></ul> | 2Mp               | 1,632 x1,232   | 0x<br>2x             | no<br>no    | JPG           | 16MB internal flash<br>2 x AA alkaline/no  | 17/72                         | 109x40x64mm<br>200g           | Kodak EasyShare                  |
| The cheap-and-cheerful CX can't match the other contenders for functionality but makes an excellent first-time buyers' model. The 2Mp CCD takes Jpeg-only shots, there's no optical zoom and only two AA batteries. However, Kodak hasn't scrimped on the most important feature – image quality.                               |                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                |                   |                |                      |             |               |                                            |                               |                               |                                  |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                         | Intermediate digital cameras                                                                                   | Mega-pixel rating | Max resolution | Optical Digital zoom | Max aperture    | File format | Storage media type<br>Battery/rechargeable   | Low/high res storage capacity | Dimensions (wx dxh)<br>Weight | Software includes               |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------|----------------------|-----------------|-------------|----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |  | <b>Samsung DigiMax V4</b><br>0845 922 3232<br><a href="http://www.samsungcamera.co.uk">www.samsungcamera.co.uk</a><br><b>NEW</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• £330</li><li>• 1-year warranty</li><li>• First review Jul 03</li></ul> | 4Mp               | 2,272x1,704    | 3x<br>4x             | f/2.8-<br>f/5   | JPG, TIF    | 32MB Secure Digital<br>1 x lithium/no        | 12/675                        | 106x38x55mm<br>210g           | MGI PhotoSuite 3.0 SE           |
| The DigiMax excels in all the right places, offering great shots, ease of use, value for money and a host of features. It isn't hugely responsive and some of the colours are muted, but detail is extremely sharp. You can even tweak focusing with the best manual control option we've seen on a compact digicam. |                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                |                   |                |                      |                 |             |                                              |                               |                               |                                 |
| 2                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |  | <b>Olympus Camedia C-730 Ultra Zoom</b><br>0800 072 0070<br><a href="http://www.olympus.com">www.olympus.com</a><br><b>LAST MONTH 1</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• £411</li><li>• 1-year warranty</li><li>• First review Spr 03</li></ul> | 3.2Mp             | 2,048x1,536    | 10x<br>3x            | f/2.8-<br>f/8   | JPG/ TIF    | 16MB SmartMedia & xD<br>2 x lithium/no       | 8/165                         | 108x78x76mm<br>310g           | Camedia Master 4.0, PhotoImpact |
| If you're after the best zoom capabilities then look no further – the compact Camedia C-730 offers a whopping 30x magnification. It might lack the image detail of other 4Mp contenders but it makes up for this with a great specification and features list. The accessories bundle is also worth the extra cost.  |                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                |                   |                |                      |                 |             |                                              |                               |                               |                                 |
| 3                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |  | <b>HP Photosmart 850</b><br>0870 747 4747<br><a href="http://www.hp.com">www.hp.com</a><br><b>LAST MONTH 2</b>                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• £399</li><li>• 1-year warranty</li><li>• First review Spr 03</li></ul> | 4.1Mp             | 2,384 x1,734   | 8x<br>7x             | f/2.8-<br>f/11  | JPG/ MPG    | 16MB Secure Digital<br>4 x AA alkaline/yes   | 5/71                          | 120x120x85mm<br>388g          | HP Photo & Imaging              |
| A great mid-range camera that takes both good-quality still images and movie footage. The Photosmart has a nice balance of intelligent automatic controls and user-override features. HP hasn't tried to be flash with the functions or the number of controls it provides, ensuring the 850 has broad user appeal.  |                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                |                   |                |                      |                 |             |                                              |                               |                               |                                 |
| 4                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |  | <b>Canon PowerShot S45</b><br>0870 514 3723<br><a href="http://www.canon.co.uk">www.canon.co.uk</a><br><b>LAST MONTH 3</b>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• £407</li><li>• 1-year warranty</li><li>• First review Jan 03</li></ul> | 4Mp               | 2,272 x1,704   | 3x<br>3.6x           | f/2.8<br>-f/4.9 | JPG, RAW    | 32MB CompactFlash Type II<br>1 x lithium/yes | 27/195                        | 112x58x42mm<br>260g           | Zoom-Browser EX                 |
| The feature-rich S45 offers good specifications, an impressive array of manual configurations and a generous software bundle – but has a price tag to match. It may not have the style clout displayed by other contenders but its metal finish and svelte dimensions make it a sturdy and compact model.            |                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                |                   |                |                      |                 |             |                                              |                               |                               |                                 |
| 5                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |  | <b>Kodak LS443 Zoom</b><br>0870 243 0270<br><a href="http://www.kodak.co.uk">www.kodak.co.uk</a><br><b>LAST MONTH 4</b>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• £329</li><li>• 1-year warranty</li><li>• First review Jan 03</li></ul> | 4Mp               | 2,448 x1,632   | 3x<br>3.3x           | f/2.8<br>-f/9.6 | JPG         | 16MB internal flash<br>1 x lithium/yes       | 12/48                         | 109x38x62mm<br>260g           | Kodak EasyShare                 |
| The LS443 can be used without having to refer to the manual and we can see Kodak's traditional user base enjoying the combination of simplicity, image quality and value for money. Indeed, the good-looking shots we took held the sharp detail better than more expensive models.                                  |                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                |                   |                |                      |                 |             |                                              |                               |                               |                                 |

## Buying advice: digital cameras

The amount of megapixels on a Beginner digital camera varies. The lowest you should expect is 2Mp unless you're paying under £150. If you're spending between £300 and £700, expect a model with a minimum of 3Mp. Many Beginner digital cameras take care of all aspects of photography, so all you have to worry about is pointing and shooting. It's

possible to track down a device that offers manual configurations, but you're likely to get a model with settings for a range of photographic conditions. Intermediate cameras should at least offer you control over exposure, ISO sensitivity, white balance and metering options.

It doesn't really matter what type of storage you get as long as the camera is bundled with plenty of it. Sadly, though, this is rarely the case. Beginner digital

cameras come with 8MB to 16MB as standard and even most Intermediate models have 16MB, with 32MB at the top end of the market.

If you don't get a good peripherals bundle then pay out for the optional extras – rechargeable batteries are vital. Lithium-ion cells are the best but most expensive, so you could settle for nickel ones. Shop around for a 4x optical zoom and consider any digital zoom capabilities a bonus.