

Backgrounder

New Minolta Single Lens Reflex (SLR)-type Digital Cameras: The DiMAGE 7 And DiMAGE 5

Targeted for release in summer 2001, the new Minolta DiMAGE 7 and DiMAGE 5 are designed to meet the needs of photographers wishing to have a SLR-type digital camera that performs under varying photographic conditions and features convenient functions that produce high quality photographic images.

Main Features:

High Resolution CCDs

Featured on the new DiMAGE 7 is a 2/3 inch-type CCD boasting 5.24 million pixels, the highest number of pixels available in consumer digital cameras.* The new DiMAGE 5 is equipped with a high quality 1/1.8 inch-type CCD with 3.34 million pixels. The benefit of incorporating a 5.24 million pixel high-resolution CCD becomes apparent when cropping a digital image file – the image can retain an impressive resolution. In spite of being a megapixel element, each pixel in the 2/3 inch-type CCD of the DiMAGE 7 is relatively large, providing a wide dynamic range.

**as of May 23, 2001*

The Optical Centerpiece: an all-glass 7x zoom Minolta GT LENS

These new Minolta digital cameras feature a new, high performance lens class for digital cameras: Minolta GT LENSES. Using Minolta's "G LENS Technology" – the same technology used in Minolta's Maxxum SLR lenses – the lens provides high-image quality with minimum chromatic aberration and curvilinear distortion, and high resolution, especially on the high end of the spectrum.

The Minolta GT LENS on the DiMAGE 7 and DiMAGE 5 achieves high performance with 16 glass elements in 13 groups. Maximum Aperture on the lens is f/2.8-f/3.5. The cameras have two AD (anomalous dispersion) glass elements and two aspheric elements. The results are sharp, detailed images at all focal lengths.

Ultra-high 7x Optical Zoom Ratio

The DiMAGE 7 and DiMAGE 5 have a high power 7x optical zoom lens that has the flexibility to shoot wide-angle landscapes to intimate portraits using the telephoto setting. The DiMAGE 7's zoom range is equivalent to a 28mm to 200mm lens in 35mm format and the DiMAGE 5's zoom range is equivalent to a 35mm to 250mm lens.

The One-Touch 2x digital zoom gives the DiIMAGE 7 a zoom ratio of up to 14x, equivalent to a 400mm lens on a 35mm camera. The DiIMAGE 5's digital zoom stretches the reach of the optical zoom to capture impressive telephoto shots equivalent to a 500mm lens on a 35mm camera with just the touch of a button.

The macro setting on the cameras produces sharp images when the subject is as near as 5 inches from the lens. The Digital Hyper Viewfinder swivels 90 degrees to offer ergonomic camera handling for close-up photography.

CxProcess™: Minolta's Image Processing Technology

Both cameras feature Minolta's proprietary CxProcess, a new image processing technology that provides clear and natural images. In image processing, too much emphasis on natural color produces flat color pictures. Overemphasizing the color range creates an unnatural color scheme. CxProcess balances both extremes by controlling sharpness, color reproduction, tonal gradation and noise to optimize results.

12-bit A/D Conversion

The DiIMAGE 7 and DiIMAGE 5 have a 12-bit A/D conversion that can provide a fine tonal gradation, with deep shadows, brilliant highlights and millions of colors, up to 4,096 levels in each RGB channel. Minolta's 12-bit A/D conversion provides exquisite details in portraiture: smooth complexion, rich shadows and luminous highlights, as opposed to the standard 10-bit A/D conversion with its limited 1,024 levels per RGB channel.

Exclusive Digital Hyper Viewfinder

The DiIMAGE 7 & DiIMAGE 5's Digital Hyper Viewfinder provides photographers with clear images, even under bright light. With its reflective ferroelectric Liquid Crystal Display (LCD) viewfinder and a visual resolution equivalent to almost 220,000 pixels, it's the first time such a sophisticated optical device has been used on a high-resolution consumer SLR-type digital camera. The variable position viewfinder can be tilted up to 90 degrees for added flexibility and creativity in shooting. The Digital Hyper Viewfinder allows the photographer to simultaneously monitor the image and camera settings.

DiIMAGE 7's 4x Electronic Magnification can enlarge the central area of the image in the viewfinder during manual focusing - an important feature when image sharpness is critical, especially with close-up photography.

Digital Effects Control

A photographer can easily control image quality before the image is written to the CompactFlash card with the Digital Effects Control. It can control exposure, contrast and color saturation in the camera and then be viewed immediately on the Digital Hyper Viewfinder.

High Performance Autofocus and Autoexposure

Using an extra-wide focus area, the cross-hair autofocus (AF) sensor in the center accurately determines subject distance, regardless of horizontal or vertical subject contrast.

With Minolta's new Flex Focus Point, a simple press of a button can change the extra-wide focus to a cross-hair spot focus point that can be moved to anywhere within the image. The Flex Focus Point can be used for subjects at the edge of the frame or for singling out a specific subject from a number of objects at varying distances. With very shallow depth-of-field, the Flex Focus Point

can eliminate focusing errors with off-centered subjects. The camera does not need to be moved to use the focus-lock function and then recomposed.

The responsive autofocus is a result of a high-speed Large Scale Integration (LSI) chip that rapidly processes image data and signals. The LSI chip incorporates a high-speed 32-bit RISC CPU and is connected to a large capacity SDRAM through a 32-bit data bus. Photographers can also choose between Single-shot AF and Continuous AF.

The DiMAGE 7 and DiMAGE 5 offer three exposure-metering modes: multi-segment, center-weighted and spot. The multi-segment metering technology in the cameras uses both light values and color information to accurately calculate the exposure. The DiMAGE 7 has 300 segments in the multi-segment metering; the DiMAGE 5 uses 256 segments. With emphasis on the main subject, the luminance patterns on the CCD and AF information are used to accurately calculate the exposure.

Smart Camera Control Layout

The camera's controls are optimally laid out for ease of use. Frequently used functions are placed in a simple, function-dial system. The Digital Hyper Viewfinder and the LCD monitor offer a graphic-user interface with a full array of shooting information. The pro-auto button allows users to easily reset the camera to fully-automatic operation. The eyepiece sensors detect if the Digital Hyper Viewfinder is being used, and switch the display between the viewfinder and the monitor accordingly.

On the playback mode, a histogram of the captured image can be displayed on the LCD, as well as single-frame, index or movie playback. Menus on the LCD are large and clear with superb visibility to input and confirm settings.

Diverse Functions

To give photographers as much control as they want, the DiMAGE 7 and DiMAGE 5 offer a variety of settings and functions. They include:

- A selection of exposure modes, including programmed AE, aperture priority, shutter priority and manual mode, shutter speed from 4 seconds to 1/2000th second and Bulb
- Digital subject program selections, such as portrait mode, sports action mode, night portrait mode, sunset mode and text mode, which combines shutter and aperture settings with image processing for optimal results under specific conditions
- Flexible white balance adjustments, including automatic, preset (daylight, tungsten, cloudy and fluorescent) and custom modes
- Camera sensitivity controls for settings such as auto, 100, 200, 400 and 800 ISO equivalents
- Digital Enhanced Bracketing not only allows for variations in exposure but also in contrast and color saturation
- High Performance flash with Advanced Distance Integration flash metering
- Movie Recording
- Long eye relief of 20mm for eyeglass wearers
- Data imprinting that records date, time and descriptive information on an image.

DiMAGE Image Viewer Utility Software

The DiMAGE Image Viewer Utility Software can display raw image data and allows for corrections and manipulations using built-in functions. The raw data is processed with a 16-bit

color depth so that the fine tonal gradations are preserved. Based on the user-friendly graphic interface of Minolta's film scanner driver software, photographers can change tone curve/histogram, brightness/contrast/color pallet, hue/saturation/lightness, and sharpness of the raw data and save the image as a 16-bit TIFF. JPEG and TIFF images can also be viewed and corrected. The Color Correction Job function saves correction settings so they may be applied to different images. In addition, the Variation function allows photographers to choose the best image from a series of automatically bracketed corrections. The unique sharpness correction method is easy and effective. The color matching is compatible with most color spaces for accurate color reproduction with the ICC profiles.

PRINT Matching Technology

Both cameras are supported by Epson's latest PRINT Image Matching technology which ensures that Minolta's digital cameras and Epson's printers work together perfectly to produce photographs that print truer-to-life than ever before.

System Accessories

- The powerful Program Flash 5600 HS (D) and 3600 HS (D) offer versatile functions such as auto power zoom, wireless/remote off-camera flash, and test flash.
- Macro flash units provide solutions for accurate and versatile digital macro photography with the use of the Macro Flash Controller. The Macro Twin Flash 2400 provides flexible lighting for nature macro photography while the Macro Ring Flash 1200 offers shadowless lighting, ideal for medical and scientific use.
- The Remote Cord RC-1000S allows off-camera shutter operation to minimize camera shake during long exposures. The Remote Cord RC-1000L allows remote shutter operation from 16 feet (five meters) away.
- The camera accepts 49mm diameter filters.

The DiIMAGE 7 will be available to consumers in July 2001. The DiIMAGE 5 will follow in August 2001.

Specifications are subject to change without notice.

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