

MINOLTA INTRODUCES THREE NEW FREEDOM ZOOM 35MM POINT-AND-SHOOT CAMERAS

*Two models feature Minolta's revolutionary new AREA-AF
autofocusing subject detection system for beautiful, effortless photography*

Ramsey, NJ (February 4, 2002) – Minolta Corporation announces today three new Freedom Zoom 35mm point-and-shoot cameras with built-in zoom lenses and flashes – the Minolta Freedom Zoom 160, Freedom Zoom 140, and Freedom Zoom 130. Two of these new cameras - the sophisticated Freedom Zoom 160 and Freedom Zoom 140 – feature Minolta's revolutionary new AREA-AF (autofocus) system, 4.3x and 3.7x zoom lenses respectively and the world's fastest AF speed¹ allowing users to take great snapshots in a moment's notice. The new Minolta Freedom Zoom 130 is a versatile compact 35mm camera with a 3.5x zoom lens.

“These new stylish 35mm compact cameras add significant value to Minolta's renowned Freedom Zoom line,” said Jon Sienkiewicz, vice president, imaging products, Minolta Corporation's Consumer Products Group. “And with the ground-breaking AREA-AF technology featured in the elegant new Freedom Zoom 160 and 140, Minolta makes it even easier to bring people into focus to get that perfect photograph. These innovative new Freedom Zoom cameras are ready to take pictures when people want to.”

Minolta Freedom Zoom 160 and Freedom Zoom 140

Minolta's New AREA-AF Autofocusing System

The new Minolta Freedom Zoom 160 and Freedom Zoom 140 cameras incorporate Minolta's new autofocusing system - AREA-AF. This new system employs advanced Minolta technology designed to make taking pictures effortless and intuitive. For a properly focused and exposed photograph, simply look through the camera's viewfinder. The viewfinder eyepiece sensors automatically activate the camera's autofocusing system. The camera's large multi-line CCD sensor can automatically differentiate between people and objects, and calculates the subject's distance, location, and luminance – automatically adjusting focus and exposure as the subject matter changes.

The AREA-AF system incorporates three autofocus modes: wide AF, spot AF, and target AF. Employing the largest AF area in a film camera², Minolta's new wide AF uses a subject-recognition system to locate a subject within the camera's focus frame. This freedom from having to place a subject in the center of the field allows flexibility in composition. Spot AF can accurately single out the subject among a group of objects. Target AF is optimized to capture sharp images of moving subjects. Access to these modes is as simple as pressing a button.

Groundbreaking technology is used in the AREA-AF system to give the Freedom Zoom 160 and Freedom Zoom 140 their exceptional performance:

- more -

- The world's largest AF area in a film camera
- The world's first film camera with subject detection
- The world's first compact camera with matrix AF indication and automatic LED brightness control
- Advanced subject-weighted multi-segment metering
- Eye start, a 32-bit RISC processor, and a high-speed AF drive creating the world's fastest focusing compact camera in its class

Minolta's New Wide AF – The Heart of the AREA-AF System

Normal autofocus systems locate the closest object within the central area in the field of view. AREA-AF automatically analyzes the objects within the wide focus framing area and prioritizes the point of focus on a human subject to reduce the probability of focusing on an extraneous object in the foreground or background. By analyzing a database of over 3,000 images and gathering statistical data on human dimensions, Minolta researchers and engineers have created a unique subject-detection system. This sophisticated new system employs shape, magnification, distance, and lighting information gathered by the camera systems to determine the subject in the scene. The camera's high-speed 32-bit RISC processor makes these complex calculations quickly and effectively.

The information from the multi-line AF sensor and subject detection system is used to calculate perfect exposures. The subject-weighted multi-segment metering system uses this information and up to 125 metering segments to calculate the exposure based on the subject and background lighting. This ensures that the subject will not be lost in the deep shadows of noon or washed out in front of dark backgrounds. The camera's aperture and shutter speed is controlled for optimum exposures, and the built-in flash is activated automatically in backlit or low-light situations. This highly accurate system ensures photographs will be perfectly exposed for every subject time after time.

The World's Fastest Autofocus Zoom Compact Cameras

The camera's eye-start function activates the focus and exposure systems when the photographer brings the Freedom Zoom 160 or Freedom Zoom 140 to their eye. The high-speed 32-bit RISC processor constantly calculates the focus and exposure even before the user touches the shutter-release button. A newly designed high-speed AF motor powers the lens while keeping the overall size and weight of the camera to a minimum. The Freedom Zoom 160 and 140 feature the world's fastest AF system among compact cameras with a 3x or larger zoom. In fact, the AF system is two to three times faster than comparable compact cameras.

The Freedom Zoom 160 and 140 feature predictive focus control normally only found in sophisticated SLR cameras. This technology allows the camera to not only focus on the subject, but also to adjust the focus as the subject moves. Target AF allows sharp images of fast moving subjects to be captured. The camera continually calculates the focus of the subject framed in the viewfinder until the shutter-release button is pressed to take the picture. During the short shutter delay, predictive focus control ensures the focus will be continually sharp even as subjects approach the camera.

Attention to details

These handsome cameras feature slim and lightweight aluminum bodies and weigh only 6.9 ounces, while housing powerful built-in zoom lenses; the Freedom Zoom 160 has a 37.5 - 160mm lens, and the Freedom Zoom 140 has a 37.5 - 140mm lens. The Freedom Zoom 160 is the world's smallest and lightest 35mm compact camera with a 160mm focal length lens.² Perfect for

vacations and gatherings of family and friends, the flexible zoom range will capture those important images, group pictures and scenic views, as well as intimate portraits and close-ups of distant landmarks.

The quiet film transport features of these cameras allows pictures to be taken without distracting noises. Minolta's innovative film-chamber lock protects the film by preventing the camera from being opened. Both models also feature:

- Autoflash with red-eye reduction
- Simple automatic film loading and rewind
- Programmed auto-exposure
- Self-timer

A quartz-date edition with optional remote-control operation is also available. The Freedom Zoom 160 also includes an exposure-compensation mode for more control over the final image as well as a continuous-advance drive mode so that a series of pictures can be taken of an unfolding event.

1. Among 35mm and advanced-photo-system compact cameras with a 3x or larger zoom lens, as of December 27, 2001.

2. As of December 27, 2001.

Minolta Freedom Zoom 130

Minolta's new compact Freedom Zoom 130 is a versatile camera with a high-quality zoom lens, new high-performance multi-beam autofocus (AF) system, worry-free film chamber lock, and a variety of shooting modes. This compact camera can be carried around easily in a pocket or purse.

Behind a sophisticated stainless-steel front shell is a high-performance zoom lens and AF system. The compact camera body features a built-in 3.5x zoom lens for a 37.5mm - 130mm focal range. The high-performance aspheric zoom lens delivers clear, crisp images. The versatile zoom range is perfect for landscape photography as well as intimate, close-up portraits. The new multi-beam AF employs four infrared beams to accurately focus on the subject.

The Freedom Zoom 130 incorporates a variety of shooting modes to optimize results under various shooting conditions, such as the night-portrait, landscape/night-view, and exposure-compensation modes. Silent-rewind mode reduces distracting noise when the film is rewound.

High-Quality Optics

The high-quality Minolta zoom lens uses two double-sided aspheric elements to ensure clear, sharp images with excellent contrast at any focal length setting.

New Multi-Beam AF System

Minolta's sophisticated new multi-beam AF with a wide focus area provides accurate focusing, even at long focal lengths. The four infrared beams significantly increase the accuracy of the AF system while minimizing the chance of erroneously focusing on the background between two subjects.

Worry-Free Film Chamber Lock

The film chamber lock saves film from being ruined by preventing the back cover from being inadvertently opened.

A Variety of Shooting Modes

A variety of modes offer control under different shooting conditions. When photographing at night, the night-portrait mode balances the flash and ambient light exposures to ensure the background is visible behind the subject. Landscape/night view mode makes it simple to capture dynamic landscapes, and spectacular night scenery. When only using natural light to illuminate the subject, the exposure-compensation mode increases the exposure by + 1.5 EV for backlit situations or high-key scenes.

Minolta Corporation

Minolta Corporation, headquartered in Ramsey, New Jersey, is the largest subsidiary of Minolta Co. Ltd. of Osaka, Japan, a leading manufacturer of cameras, business equipment, radiometric instruments and planetariums. Minolta Corporation's Consumer Products Group (CPG) markets 35 mm film and Advanced Photo System cameras, digital cameras, binoculars, accessory lenses, photographic light meters, 35mm and Advanced Photo System film scanners and other consumer products. Minolta is the exclusive distributor of *Cokin* filters.

The corporation's Business Products Group (BPG) markets digital and analog office equipment. Products include black-and-white copiers, digital black and white printer/copiers, plain-paper laser facsimile machines, digital color printer/copiers, micrographic systems, document management software, and related office equipment.

For more information, visit Minolta's Web site located at www.minoltausa.com or access Minolta's PHOTOFAX at 800-528-4767.

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