

Amateur Photographer

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A Leica for less

The **Leica Q** is a great used buy – despite the red-dot price premium

PHOTOGRAPHERS' GUIDE

2024

- What to **shoot**
- Where to **go**
- What not to **miss**

Google Pixel 8 Pro

Does the 'smartphone for photographers' beat rivals?



Turn over a new leaf

Discover creative
ways to shoot trees

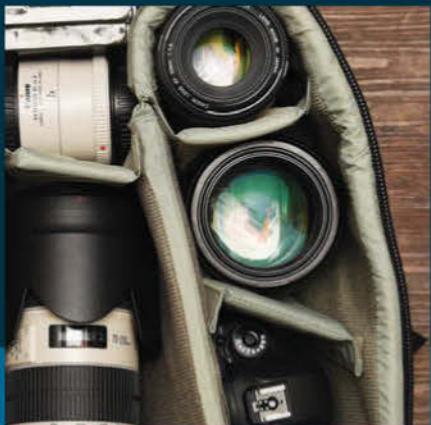


02
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Plus Valleret's latest photographers' gloves on test • DSLR lens buying guide



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See mpb.com/info/unused-tech-survey for more details.

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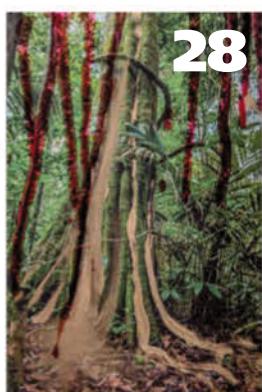
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CIRCLE OF LIGHT © ANDREAS EITZ



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COVER PICTURE © JON DEVO. INSET PICTURE © SUE BAILEY

THIS WEEK'S CONTRIBUTORS



TRACY CALDER



PETER DENCH



AMY DAVIES

Features Editor
AP's smartphone expert tests Google's latest in its Pixel 8 series, the Pixel 8 Pro



ROD LAWTON

Editing pro Rod explains how to fix lens distortion and perspective distortion in Affinity Photo 2



MICHAEL TOPHAM

AP regular Michael re-appraises the game-changing Leica Q (Typ 116) full-frame compact



ANGELA NICHOLSON

Testing ace Angela Nicholson reviews Vallerret's Milford Photography Gloves

Welcome



Yes, the festivities are over but this issue is bound to lift any January blues. With new year being a great time to try different things, we reveal some of the most interesting subjects to shoot in 2024. Why not try a whole new genre? If you are really running out of inspiration, there are always trees – as Peter Dench reveals, photographers the world over keep coming up with fresh new ways of shooting them. Hardware highlights include a review of the Google Pixel 8 Pro, which is full of powerful photo features, and we reveal why the Leica Q is a great used buy if you've always lusted after the red dot but lack the loot. Finally, why not kick off 2024 with a print or digital subscription to AP? The details are on page 26.

Geoff Harris, Deputy Editor



Cover image shot by Jon Devo using a Panasonic Lumix S5IIIX and Rotolight Titan lighting. Creative Director - Hayley Lai; Photo Assistant - Jack Lai; Hair and Makeup - Kerry White; Model - Georgia K

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Flickr: flickr.com/groups/amateurphotographer

Amateur
Photographer



The winning image, 'Winter Fieldfare' by Gianpiero Ferrari



Birds of a feather

THE SOCIETY of International Nature and Wildlife Photographers (SINWP) has announced the winners of the SINWP Bird Photographer of the Year 2023 in aid of RSPB competition. The winning entry was 'Winter Fieldfare' by Gianpiero Ferrari from Leicestershire.

'The shot is from my garden,' Gianpiero explains. 'After a snowfall during the night, several fieldfares came in the garden to take advantage of the apple I provided. This one was very aggressive and took over the entire garden, chasing away all the other birds. I started to take some pictures from the house through a window, but I was not happy with the composition. I thought a ground-level

composition would have been much better. So first I had to build a pile of snow to use as a background and then I lay on the ground under a camouflage blanket, waiting for the bird to return to eat the apples.'

Second place went to Robert Gloeckner from Florida, while third place was awarded to Kevin Rooney from Gloucestershire. Over 1,750 entrants were submitted to this latest competition. 'Thank you to all entrants for sharing your work with us – at the same time as benefitting the RSPB to the tune of £2,273.42 bringing the total raised by this competition to £13,271 over the six years it has been running,' said the judges.

Visit sinwp.com

Toy story

AMONGST Lego's new Creator 3-in-1 sets for 2024 is a retro 35mm film camera. The set has a total of 261 parts including pieces to make two film rolls as well as a working film rewind handle and a flash hotshoe. Though you can't take photos with this Lego toy camera, it includes slide-like images of safari animals and pets which can be attached to the canisters. The set,



The retro 35mm Lego toy camera has a total of 261 parts

designed for budding photographers aged eight and above, can alternatively be used to build a toy video camera, complete with a viewing screen. It's just a shame it wasn't available for Christmas – the set went on sale on 1 January for £17.99. See www.lego.com/en-gb



The Panasonic Lumix G100D

Lumix upgrade

PANASONIC has announced the Lumix G100D in Japan, an upgrade to the Lumix G100. It features a USB Type-C port, in order to comply with the EU's common charger directive that's set to be implemented from 28 December 2024, and an updated OLED electronic viewfinder. Price and UK release dates are not yet available.



The new cine lens from 7Artisans is available for several mounts

Wide boy

7ARTISANS has announced an ultrawide 14mm T2.9 Cine lens, which it claims offers 'a dramatic perspective ideal for capturing landscapes and various wideangle compositions.' Available for Nikon Z, Sony E, Lumix L and Canon RF mounts, the lens costs £370. You can buy it from pergear.com/products/7artisans-14mm-t2-9



Pixel 8 Pro gets more AI

THE RECENTLY released Google Pixel 8 Pro is the first handset to run Gemini, the firm's new AI model. The Video Boost feature now uses AI to adjust colour, lighting, stabilisation and graininess when videos are uploaded to the cloud, and AI is also used to reduce noise on videos recorded at night or in low light, including timelapse. The Google Pixel 8 series already comes with AI features like Best Take and Magic Editor that made a splash when the phones were announced in October.



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ROTOLIGHT.COM

Northern exposures

THE WINNERS of the sixth Northern Lights Photographer of the Year competition have been announced by organisers Capture the Atlas, a travel and photography blog. The overall winner is 'Circle of Life', taken in Lapland by Frøydis Dalheim. He used a Canon EOS 5D Mark IV DSLR, a reminder that you don't need the latest mirrorless gear to take winning images, and a Sigma 14mm lens. UK-based winners included Matthew Browne, who shot the northern lights when they made a rare appearance over Paxton Tower in Wales, and Kat Lawman who captured the lights over Penmon Lighthouse, Wales.

'The quality of the image, the story behind the shot, and the overall inspiration that the photograph can provide are the main factors for selecting the images every year,' explained Capture the Atlas. 'As we get closer to a solar maximum (the period of greatest solar activity during the Sun's 11-year solar cycle), we are seeing northern lights displays at lower latitudes, and aurora images in unique places where they haven't been photographed before. In this year's competition, we have aurora images from Wales, Germany, Italy's Dolomites, mainland Australia and Death Valley National Park in the US.'

The aurora season ranges from September to April in the northern hemisphere and from March to September in the southern hemisphere.

Learn more about the winning images at bit.ly/captureatlas



Circle of Life, by Frøydis Dalheim, was named overall winner

Last call for Societies show discount

THE SOCIETY OF PHOTOGRAPHERS (The Societies) is celebrating its 21st birthday this year and is holding its annual London Photo Convention and Trade Show at the Novotel London hotel from 17-20 January. The event will feature over 100 equipment brands, including Sony, Canon, Epson and Fujifilm, alongside over 200 hours of classes from 80 speakers, a Live Stage and more. Tickets for most of the main events are free, but you need to preregister at thesocieties.net/convention, where you can find full details of what's scheduled. Attendance at the masterclasses requires payment, but AP readers can get 10% off the usual price by using the code AP24.



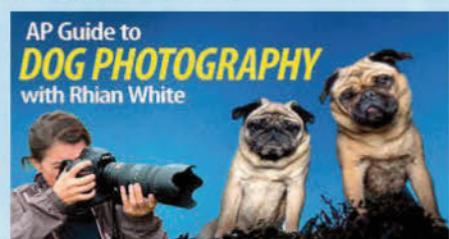
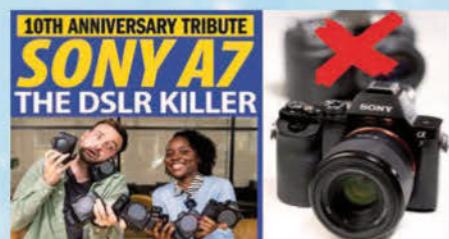
To preregister for the event, go to: thesocieties.net/convention



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SOME RECENT VIDEOS



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CAMERAWORLD.CO.UK

Ward 81: Voices

by Mary Ellen Mark & Karen Folger Jacobs

£70, Steidl, hardback, 288 pages, ISBN: 9783969990131



Amy Davies looks at the expanded edition of a compelling long-term work whose themes remain relevant today

In 1976, photographer Mary Ellen Mark and writer Karen Folger Jacobs spent five weeks photographing the patients at a locked ward at the Oregon State Hospital in Salem.

Every day, the two women photographed and interviewed the women, while at night they slept in an empty adjacent ward.

The resulting project – Mary Ellen Mark's first independent long-term work – was first published in 1979. This expanded edition – *Voices* – includes previously unpublished photographs, excerpts from interviews with patients and recorded conversations between Mark and Jacobs, as well as new essays which take a look at the impact of their project.

At times, this is not an easy or comfortable read, but since its original publication, *Ward 81* has been credited with its power to portray those living on the edges of society with compassion and kindness – particularly when it comes to women.

Here of course, we not only see the women who have been institutionalised, but as the insight into their lives also comes from women, we get a special perspective that wouldn't be quite the same had it come from a male lens or voice.

Mary Ellen Mark died in 2005, but is widely considered to be one of the most influential American photographers of all time, with her reach still being wide-ranging.

Although looking back almost 50 years now, the themes within a book like this remain as relevant as ever, with an ongoing mental health and medical crisis in the States – and beyond. We might like to think we're far more enlightened these days, but work like this shows us that there were always those willing to show humanity in difficult circumstances.

If you're interested in relatively long-term and in-depth projects, this makes for compelling reading – but beyond that, the technical excellence on display is also worth a look, too.





Left: Karen Folger Jacobs wrote in the epilogue to *Ward 81*: 'The patients we knew as the women of Ward 81 are tattooed on our memories like graffiti. For the rest of our lives, we will dream about them and their confinement. Again and again we will be surprised to wake up in beds without straps or padlocks, surprised to be able to see out of windows free of wire barriers'

Below: The women on Ward 81 were considered dangerous to themselves or to others

© MARY ELLEN MARK



Books & exhibitions

The latest and best books and exhibitions from the world of photography



Page 17
Top left: A child in a slum in Dharavi, Mumbai, India. The book shows how children live in various parts of the world.



Where Children Sleep Vol.2 by James Mollison

£35, Hoxton Mini Press, hardback, 160 pages, ISBN: 9781914314445



The cover of this book might very well have you thinking it's a jolly and sanitised look at children's bedroom setups – perhaps for a cosy interiors magazine.

However, the second volume of this ongoing photographic project reveals that for many children across the world, the reality is very different.

Alongside text about their families, habits and hobbies, we get a look at the varied conditions in which children sleep. Dealing with subjects such as climate change, hurricanes, refugee camps and beyond, it's an important look at social issues from an interesting approach.

From this description, you might think that it's going to be quite miserable – but the book is full of resilience and hope, too, and is well worth picking up and taking a look at.

Remember Me by Preston Gannaway

£50, GOST Books, hardback, 132 pages, ISBN: 9781915423016



This compelling long-term documentary project sees the photographer Preston Gannaway photographing a boy called EJ for the past 17 years, following the death of his mother.

Gannaway was a young journalist in 2006 working at the *Concord Monitor* in New Hampshire when she was assigned a family story, where the mother, Carolynne St Pierres, was dying of liver cancer. The stories that came from Gannaway's time with the family was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Feature Photography in 2008. Once Carolynne had died, Gannaway stayed in contact with the family, with the focus turning to EJ – who was just four at the time of his mother's death. The project is ongoing, but *Remember Me* is a beautiful, poignant and touching tribute to the close connections between photographer and subject. Highly recommended.



It's good to share

Our favourite photos posted by readers on our social media channels this week

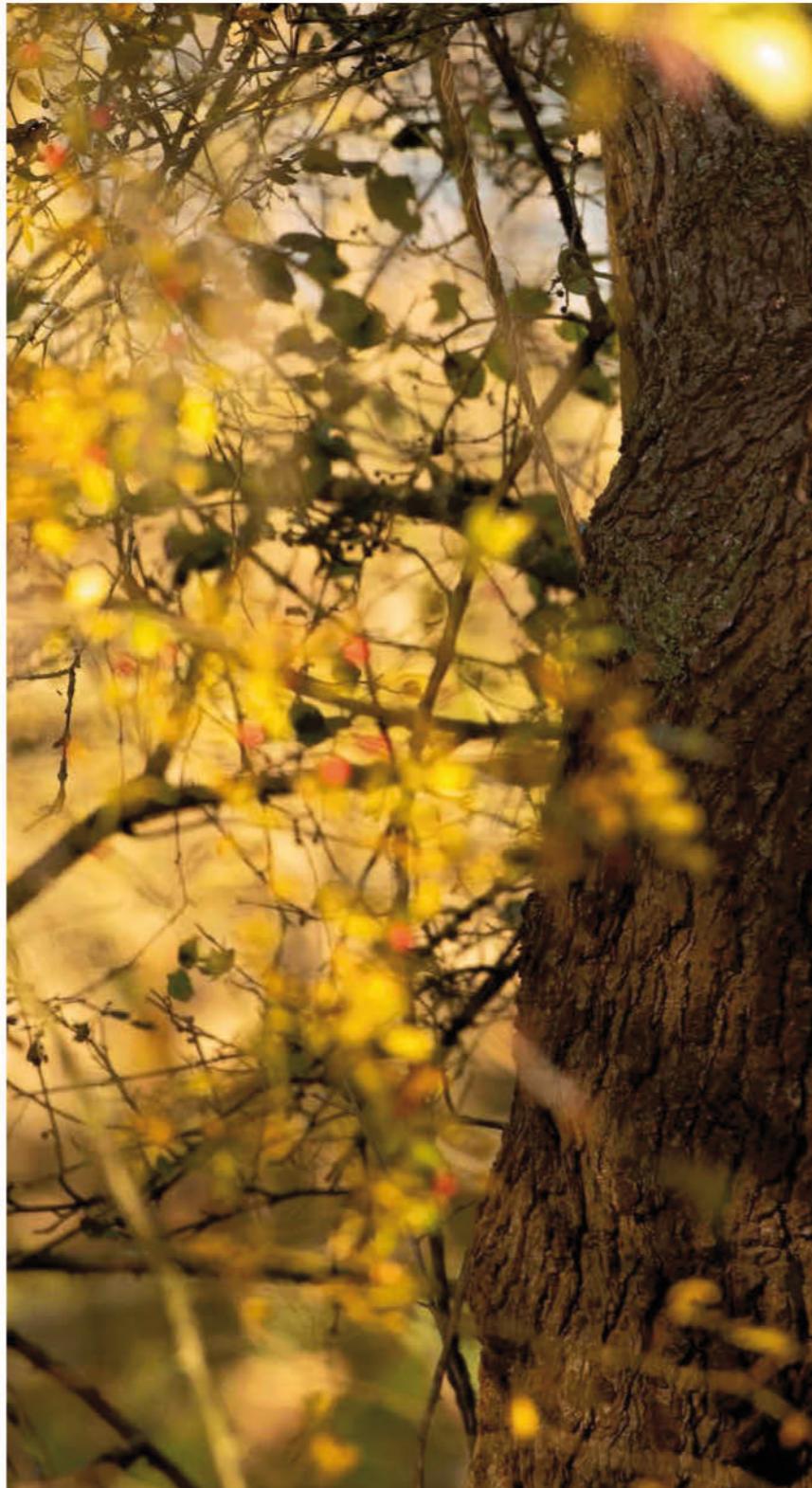
AP picture of the week

An Autumnal Owl by Thomas Roberts

Canon EOS 5D Mark IV, Canon 500mm F4 L IS USM, 1/500sec at f/4, ISO 500

'I set off with a fellow photographer to find this tawny owl. I've seen plenty of nice close-up images but with the leaves in wonderful autumnal colour I thought bringing them into the image with a slightly wider scene would help create something special!'

Instagram @spottedthroughlens



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**It's good
to share**

Neon Night Out

by Patrick Zeisler

Canon EOS R10, Canon RF 50mm F1.8 STM, 1/160sec at f/1.8, ISO 800

'There's just something about the combination of neon lights and reflections, especially when it's a rainy day, which keep on fascinating me. It opens up so many possibilities of seeing the world through a different perspective. Objects which seem rather unspectacular and inconspicuous can shine in a new light and create something special.'

Social media: @patrickzeislerphotography



We also liked...



One Good Strike

by Feng Hou

Sony A7C, Tamron 28-75mm G2, 1/8sec at f/22, ISO 100

'Greeted by an intense storm during a weekend getaway in Malaysia, I seized the opportunity to capture the mesmerising spectacle of dazzling bolts of lightning illuminating the darkened sky through the protective barrier of my hotel window. Its glass pane acted as an unexpected yet fortuitous filter, enhancing the ethereal beauty of each shot.'

Instagram: @heyfenghou

Want to see your pictures here? Simply share them with our Flickr, Instagram, Twitter, or Facebook communities using the hashtag #appicoftheweek. Or you can email your best shot to us at ap.ed@kelsey.co.uk. See page 3 for how to find us.

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Free (or cheap) photo inspiration

When money is tight it's tempting to pack away your camera, but don't fret because there are plenty of low-cost (and free) UK attractions and handy resources available to fuel your creativity. **Tracy Calder** chooses 50 of her favourites

Low-cost days out



A vivid aurora over Skagsanden beach, Lofoten Islands, Norway

Look to the sky

Every year, the National Maritime Museum in London plays host to some of the world's greatest space photography, from glittering stars to shimmering galaxies and fiery suns, thanks to entrants to the Astronomy Photographer of the Year competition. This year's exhibition runs until Aug/Sept and is sure to whet your appetite for astrophotography. If you would like to take things further, order a copy of the 2024 Guide to the Night Sky by Storm Dunlop and Wil Tirion. www.rmg.co.uk, £10 (adult entry to exhibition)

Meet the dragon

Celebrate the year of the dragon by joining Chinese New Year celebrations across the UK. Manchester, Belfast and London are just three of the cities hosting events, with colourful parades, lanterns, live performances and traditional food on offer. In London, more than 50 teams take part in a vibrant Chinese New Year parade, which is often followed by firecrackers, speeches and a Lions' Eye-Dotting Ceremony. www.visitlondon.com, free

Join the theatre

Recognised as one of the top ten free festivals in the UK by *The Guardian*, SO Festival brings street theatre and outdoor arts to Skegness and Mablethorpe. This year's event will be held in June and is sure to offer a curated mix of home-grown and international talent. Last year's festival featured puppets, dancing, installations and circus workshops so there's sure to be plenty to keep your shutter firing. Other notable outdoor festivals



Street performance at the Hat Fair in Winchester

include the Hat Fair in Winchester, parts of Brighton Festival & Fringe and the Festival of Fools in Belfast.

www.sofestival.org;
www.hatfair.co.uk;
www.brightonfestival.org;
www.foolsfestival.com,
 free



Colourful street art in Brighton

Hit the streets

Many cities in the UK have fine examples of street art (designs painted with permission), which can serve as wonderful backdrops for portraits, fashion shoots or even make great subjects in their own right. Brighton & Hove, for example, has an international reputation for its street art, while Bristol

has designs by world-famous artist Banksy (you can even go on a self-guided walking tour to spot his work). Meanwhile, London is home to Wood Street Walls – a team who donate time, materials and income to create free artwork in a number of formats. You can download a map of WSW art and take a walk around Walthamstow to see its art. www.woodstreetwalls.co.uk, free



Tracy Calder

Tracy Calder is a former editor of *Outdoor Photography* magazine. In 2018 she co-founded Close-up Photographer of the Year. She has written numerous photography books and her work has appeared in The Saatchi Gallery, The Photographers' Gallery and The National Portrait Gallery. She writes a free Letter to Creatives, which has more than 4.5k subscribers. To sign up, visit www.cupoty.com

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CIRCLE OF LIGHT © ANDREW ETTI
© VISITBRITAIN/ADRIENNE PHOTOGRAPHY

© TRACY CALDER



© NATIONAL GARDEN SCHEME / SUSIE BELL

Grow your own

The National Garden Scheme (NGS) allows visitors to access more than 3,500 private gardens in England, Wales, Northern Ireland and the Channel Islands, raising money for nursing and health charities through admissions and the sale of teas and cakes. You can search gardens by type or via the Find a Garden option on the website. Gardens are open for a small fee (most allow photography, but those that don't usually display a notice at the entrance). Virtual tours of some gardens can be viewed online so you can check out photo opportunities before you go.

www.ngs.org.uk, from £5

Take the train

Home to locomotives in tip-top condition, the National Railway Museum in York is the perfect place for close-up and wider views of some of the world's finest trains. Star objects include the world's fastest steam locomotive (the Mallard), a first-generation 1960s bullet train (the Shinkansen) and a beautifully preserved example of the high-speed train that blazed a trail in 1976 (the Intercity 125). This year sees the opening of a number of temporary exhibitions and the return of the Young Railway Photographer of the Year competition.

www.railwaymuseum.org.uk, free



© NATIONAL RAILWAY MUSEUM

The turntable at the National Railway Museum



© ANDY BARTLETT

Piper's Hill, Worcestershire Wildlife Trust reserve

Into the wild

The Wildlife Trusts is a movement of 46 independent charities, all sharing the same mission: to bring wildlife back, empower people to take meaningful action and to create an inclusive society where nature matters. You can do your bit by donating, volunteering, taking part in a citizen science project or becoming a member. There are more than 2,300 reserves supported by The Wildlife Trusts.

www.wildlifetrusts.org, from free (although donations are welcome)

Fly high

Spanning two days in July, the Wales Airshow offers spectators the chance to see aerobatic displays, state-of-the-art aircraft and amazing ground displays, for free! The grand sweep of Swansea Bay provides a picturesque backdrop for the event. Last year's highlights included a display by the RAF Red Arrows, a Battle of Britain Memorial Flight and some wing walkers. You can get a display timetable by downloading the Wales Airshow app (£1.99). www.walesnationalairshow.com, free

Celebrate our heritage

Every September hundreds of historic monuments and buildings (many of them often closed to the public) throw open their doors. In the past, prisons, archives, inland waterways and churches have all been explored, helping people discover the diverse and rich cultural heritage of England and its communities. The event is England's contribution to the European Heritage Days festival, established in 1994. www.heritageopendays.org.uk, free



© VISTIBITAN / ROD EDWARDS

Up and away

It's a thrill to see a hot-air balloon drift across the landscape, but if you attend a festival celebrating these flame-filled craft you are much more likely to achieve a frame-filling shot. The Bristol International Balloon Fiesta (held in August) is one of the most popular of its kind. While morning ascents are popular, the event also offers evening events and a night glow (where balloons fire up in time to music). www.bristolballoonfiesta.co.uk, free (but car parking must be paid for in advance)

Podcasts, books and creative communities



An Opinionated Guide to Free London

Save the silver

A day out in London can be pricey: the cost of Tube fares, coffee, cakes and attractions all add up, and that's before you factor in the price of getting there! Thankfully, Emma Watts has teamed up with the wonderful people at Hoxton Mini Press to create *An Opinionated Guide to Free London*, featuring everything from sky-high gardens to picturesque canal walks, photogenic markets and inspiring lectures – none of which will cost you a penny.

www.hoxtonminipress.com, £10.95



To inspire:
Artist Matt Collishaw used laser scanning to show an oak tree in Sherwood Forest as a beautiful, ghost-like apparition in his 2017 exhibition, *The Darkened Room*. The Major Oak is a giant with a hollow trunk and many ancient limbs. No one knows its precise age, but experts suggest 800–1,100 years.



Follow the news

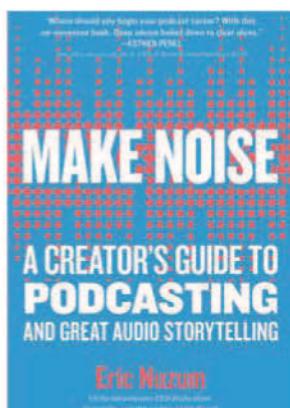
Reading a regular newsletter featuring recommendations, tips and observations can serve as creative rocket fuel. In recent years I've learnt so much from the scribblings of Austin Kleon, McKinley Valentine and David duChemin. To keep on top of industry news, I enjoy reading AP's newsletter. (I also write a newsletter entitled Letter to Creatives – you can sign up via www.cupoty.com.)

www.austinkleon.com, free, can pay to upgrade;
www.mckinleyvalentine.com, free, can pay to upgrade; www.davidduchemin.com;
www.amateurphotographer.com, free

Hear this

In his excellent book *Make Noise: A Creator's Guide to Podcasting*, Eric Nuzum suggests that podcasting differs from other forms of audio media because of its unequalled intimacy. Firstly, we usually listen to a podcast through earphones. Secondly, we play an active role in the listening process. My favourite photography and creativity podcasts include SheClicks (hosted by Angela Nicholson), In Discussion (run by Euan Ross) and Letters from a Hopeful Creative (starring Sara Tasker and Jen Carrington). I also like listening to shows from New Scientist, as well as Song Exploder and How to Fail.

www.sheclicks.net; www.biblioscapes.com;
www.lettersfromahopefulcreative.com, free



Podcasts are a great source of inspiration



Photographers' Guide to Working with Galleries

LensCulture has released a free 136-page PDF

Download inspiration

While it might feel like everyone is asking for money at the moment, there are still some excellent free resources available. I recently came across a 136-page downloadable PDF from LensCulture entitled *Photographers' Guide to Working with Galleries*. Eric Kim's *100 Lessons from the Masters of Street Photography* is also excellent (he has lots of free PDFs on his website) and Scott Bourne's *Essays on Inspiration, Creativity & Vision in Photography* is well worth a read.

www.lensculture.com; erickimphotography.com;
<http://static.animoto.com/files/vision.pdf>

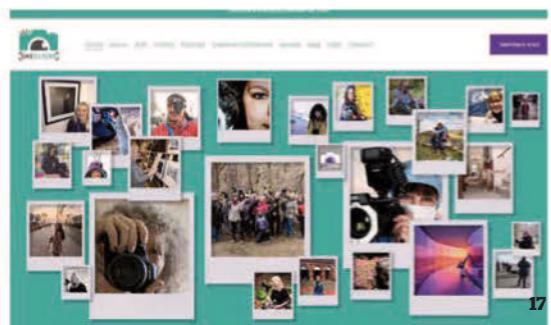


Being part of an online community has many benefits

Community minded

Joining an online photographic community can result in valuable feedback, excellent technical advice and perhaps more importantly great friendships. There are plenty to choose from, but I personally recommend Two Photographers (run by Tim Clinch and Joanna MacLennan) and SheClicks (run by Angela Nicholson). Two Photographers holds online meetings as well as workshops, mentoring sessions and assignments. SheClicks holds meet-ups, competitions, friendly chat and a podcast (and an award from AP!).

www.two-photographers.com;
www.sheclicks.net, both free to join



Landmarks, monuments and beauty spots



Walking around Edinburgh is sure to unearth picture opportunities

Lace up your boots

Going on a walking tour of a town or city is a great way to scout out photo locations and get some salient facts to add to picture captions. You can sometimes download an audio tour of your chosen location, but it's often more fun to visit the nearest tourist information centre and book a guided in-person tour. Alternatively, search reviews online and book a tour before you go – City Explorers in Edinburgh, for example, offers a two-hour walking tour of the city, free of charge.

www.cityexplorertours.com, free

Walk this way

The UK's official long-distance paths pass through some epic landscapes. The South West Coast path, for example, starts among the heather and scrub of Exmoor National Park and makes its way along the rugged coastline of Devon and Cornwall before heading into Dorset and finishing at Poole Harbour (a total of 630 miles). The North Coast Path is all about big skies and amazing wildlife, and the Pembrokeshire Coast Path covers clifftops, harbours and sandy beaches. Challenging yourself to walk, and photograph, one of these routes over the

Rocky headland on the South West Coast Path



© VISITBRITAIN/ARON JENKIN

course of a few weeks or months is sure to be an unforgettable experience.

www.nationaltrail.co.uk, free

Lindisfarne in Northumberland can be reached by car or on foot



Watch the birdie

The six-mile crossing from the seaside town of Ballycastle in Northern Ireland to the wildlife haven of Rathlin Island is the beginning of a mini adventure. On a clear day you can see the Scottish island of Islay, the Mull of Kintyre and, of course, the Antrim coastline. On dry land you can visit the RSPB West Light Seabird centre and enjoy watching guillemots, razorbills, kittiwakes, fulmars and puffins. You can also take a walking trail through the heathland and meadows in search of the Rathlin 'golden hare'.

www.rspb.org.uk, ferry £8 each way, entrance to island £5 (RSPB members free)



Rathlin Island, Northern Ireland, 2022

Go wild

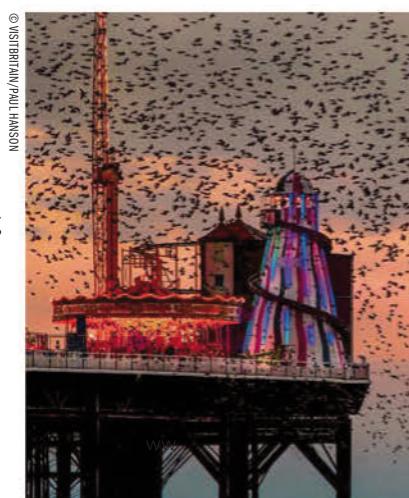
Few coastal drives boast as many wonders (and twists and turns) as the Wild Atlantic Way in Ireland. Spanning 1,600 miles it's one of the longest routes of its kind in the world. Starting in the Inishowen Peninsula to the north it winds its way down the west coast, finally ending in the town of Kinsale, County Cork to the south. Along the way you'll find plenty of reasons to pull over and unpack your camera gear including beaches, ancient monuments, cliffs and picturesque bays.

www.thewildatlanticway.com, free

Treasure an island

There are more than 7,700 offshore islands around the coast of Britain. These range from volcanic plugs and saltmarshes to beach-fringed islets and inhospitable rocks. Some require not only fair weather but also a fair amount of cash to reach – the isolated archipelago of St Kilda in Scotland is just one example – but others are less draining on the stomach and wallet. One of my favourites is Lindisfarne in Northumberland. You can drive or walk to the island (when the tide is out) and once there you'll find plenty of plants and wildlife to train your lens on – there's also a rather fine castle.

www.lindisfarne.org.uk, free





**Bowes-Lyon Rose Garden,
RHS Garden Wisley**

Join a photography morning

It used to be the case that you turned up at a privately owned garden and secretly feared being turned away if you set up your tripod. However, in recent years some larger venues have become much more photographer friendly. RHS Wisley, for example, sometimes runs photography mornings where you're invited to take advantage of the early-morning light by entering the gardens before the general public. It's worth asking if your location of choice offers this. www.rhs.org.uk, from £18.20 (standard adult entry including Gift Aid)



Camden Market has plenty of photogenic shops and stalls

Market yourself

Described as a 'melting pot of music, fashion, experiences and food', Camden Market is a great place for street photography, candid portraits and, of course, shopping. Established in 1974, it's just one of many London markets offering a true taste of the capital. Borough Market (one of the largest and oldest food markets in the city) and Portobello Road Market (famous for its antiques) are other fine examples.

www.camdenmarket.com; www.boroughmarket.org.uk; www.portobelloroad.co.uk, free

Go back to childhood

When I started reading Enid Blyton's Famous Five novels to my daughter a few years ago, I was struck by the delight the children took in simple pleasures like rockpooling, exploring hedgerows and lazing about on the beach. It got me thinking about how we adults could benefit from being a bit more childlike and curious. Why not dig out your childhood books (the Ladybird series is a good springboard for ideas) and photograph what happens when you take part in activities usually reserved for children.

www.ladybirdflyawayhome.com; Ladybird books from £5

Rockpooling and beachcombing are not activities reserved for kids



Brighton Palace Pier offers a chance for wildlife shots

Give in to pier pressure

Apparently 2023 was the Year of the Pier, but if you missed the seaside celebrations you can make up for it this year by visiting some of the 50 or so piers dotted along Britain's coastline. These glorious structures present opportunities for architectural photography, candid portraits and, in the case of Brighton Palace Pier (and a few others), wildlife shots.

www.piers.org.uk, mostly free

Bath Abbey and Tower, Bath, Somerset



Let us pray

There are many churches, cathedrals and chapels in the UK that are free to enter. Often for a small fee (or donation) you can climb towers, explore crypts and enter bell-ringing chambers. These buildings will sometimes offer you a fine bird's-eye view of surrounding streets and, in the case of Salisbury Cathedral, a view of actual birds – peregrines started nesting in the tower in 1864 and after a long absence have returned. www.salisburycathedral.org.uk, £11 (standard adult entry), many others free

© TRACY CALDER

Projects, learning, shows and videos



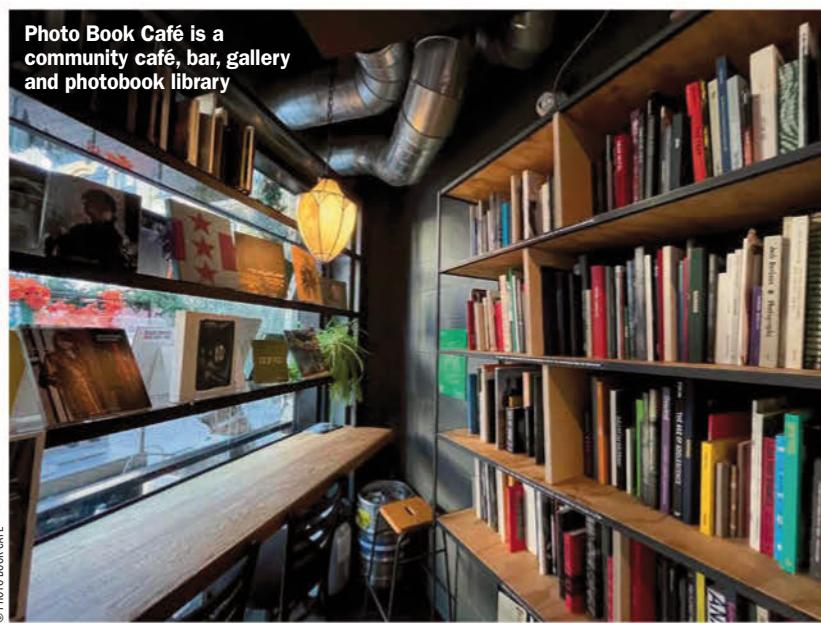
Rasha Al Jundi was the 2022 recipient of the Ian Parry Photojournalism Grant

© RASHA AL JUNDI

Complete a project

The Centre for British Photography recently announced the creation of a programme of grants and mentorship to support photographers and artists (applications close later this month). If you could do with some help completing a project or taking ideas to the next level, it's worth looking around to see what financial (and emotional/professional) help is available. The Royal Photographic Society (RPS), for example, offers bursaries, discounts and scholarships, while the Ian Parry Photojournalism Grant offers support to young (and emerging) photographers.

www.britishphotography.org; www.rps.org; www.ianparry.org, free



© PHOTO BOOK CAFÉ

Keep it quiet

The photo book has never lost its appeal and there are wonderful offerings from independent publishers like Hoxton Mini Press, Café Royal Books and RRB Photobooks, as well as big guns like Thames & Hudson, Dewi Lewis and Aperture (to name a few). However, if you would like to browse a selection of past

and present offerings, consider purchasing a membership to the Martin Parr Foundation (MPF), visiting the 'Photography and the Book' room at the V&A or popping into a book café (try the Photo Book Café in London)

www.martinparrfoundation.org;
www.vam.ac.uk;
www.phobookcafe.co.uk, from free

What Is Motion Blur and How To Capture It?



Take some advice

Plenty of photo equipment specialists publish free technique and buying guides online. While most will be geared towards the products they sell, they still offer valuable advice and guidance. Manfrotto, for instance, has useful blog entries on perfecting motion blur and demystifying lighting equipment as well as buying guides for tripods, bags and even backdrops and surfaces. Meanwhile, MPB has photo and video kit guides, interviews with professional photographers and articles offering tips and advice on photo techniques.

www.manfrotto.com; www.mpb.com



One of the best ways to complete a project is to make yourself accountable

Race to the finish

Most of us have photo projects or ideas that we never finish or never start. The best way to ensure that you complete a project is to make yourself accountable: tell other people what you're doing and encourage them to check on your progress. Recently, I've come across a few online groups that allow you to log in and join others working on projects for a set amount of time. Sara Tasker from Me & Orla runs a Co-Working and Creative Clinic where you can bring along anything you're struggling with in your creative, online or business life.

meandorla.substack.com, £6.50 a month, which includes co-working sessions



Folio Friday at The Photographers' Gallery, supported by The Fenton Arts Trust

Review your progress

Sometimes it's hard to see where a particular project is heading or if a series has any real merit and it can help to seek advice from experts in the industry. Some festivals (such as FORMAT24) offer online (or in-person) portfolio reviews enabling you to discuss your work at length. The Photographers' Gallery in London hosts Folio Fridays where you can receive feedback during a 15-minute one-to-one review for free. (Alternatively, you can sign up for a one-to-one online review with Gallery curators, which is £25 for a 20-minute session and supports Folio Fridays.)

www.formatfestival.com, price TBC; www.thephotographersgallery.org.uk, free on Folio Fridays



© TRACY CALDER

The Nisi Close-up Filter can turn your current lens into a macro lens

Be a know-it-all

It's easy to be seduced by new camera gear, but before you upgrade your current kit, make sure you have reached the limits of what you've already got. A simple job like familiarising yourself with custom menus or reading the manual in its entirety may unlock useful features.

Upgrading firmware can make a big difference too. It's also worth checking if there are things you can add to your system to get the results you desire – if you want to shoot macro, for example, but can't afford a dedicated macro lens, an accessory like the Nisi Close-up Lens might do the job. www.nisi optics.co.uk, from £79; **Experimenting with what you've got, free**

**Tate membership has many perks
(Tate Britain rehang)**



© TATE (MADELEINE BUDDO)

Pick a card

Splashing out an annual pass, or becoming a member of a museum or gallery can save you a lot of money in the long run. A National Art Pass, for example, will give you free entry to lots of museums, galleries and buildings, as well as 50% off some major exhibitions.

What's more, becoming a member of Tate will give you unlimited free entry to all its galleries as well as invitations to special events, viewings, and access to the Members Rooms. www.artfund.org, membership £56.25 a year; www.tate.org.uk, membership £72 a year



Log on

In recent years (largely due to the Covid lockdowns) there has been a huge rise in online talks and webinars. Some of my favourites include Martin Parr's Sofa Sessions, SheClicks webinars and online talks from The Royal Photographic Society (RPS). If you decide to book a ticket, see if a recording will be made available – it's easy to forget to attend. What's more, check the time zones!

www.martinparrfoundation.org, free; www.sheclicks.net, free; www.rps.org, starts from free



© THE PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEO SHOW

The Photography & Video Show is a great place to go for inspiration

Show time

Whether you're a beginner or a full-time professional, The Photography & Video Show in Birmingham is a great place to go for inspiration and advice. Plan your visit to make the most of all the talks and demos. Look out for discounts on tickets in the press in the run-up to the show. Parking is cheaper if you book in advance as of course are train fares! You can also save a fair amount by taking your own drinks and food. www.thephoto show.com, £14.95 for a one-day pass



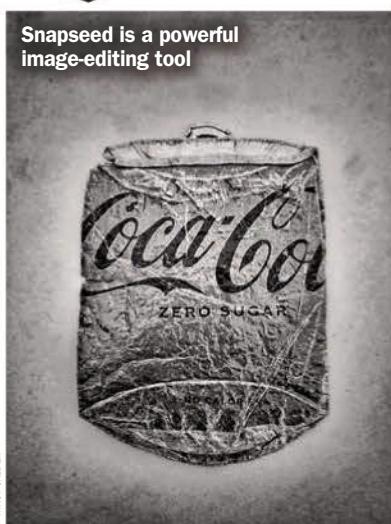
London calling

The Guardian describes Photo London as the photography event of the year, and it's easy to see why. Every May a selection of the world's leading photography galleries and dealers present their offerings at Somerset House, and this grand showcase is matched by a series of eclectic satellite events all around the capital. The team behind Photo London also hosts a number of talks in the months running up to the show (check the website for details).

www.photolondon.org, ticket price TBC

Competitions, associations and apps

Snapseed is a powerful image-editing tool



© TRACY CALDER

Pick up the phone

Photo-editing apps are great for tweaking (and posting) pictures when you're out and about and they have come a long way in recent years. My favourites include Snapseed, Canva and Lightroom. Snapseed has a great range of digital filters, and you can use it to crop, rotate, heal and even tweak white balance. Canva is great for creating social media posts, adding text to images and videos. Finally, the Lightroom mobile app allows you to edit, organise and enhance images on your smartphone or tablet.

apps.apple.com; www.canva.com; www.adobe.com; Snapseed, free; Canva, free, basic level; Lightroom, included in Creative Cloud subscription



© SRIRAM MURALI

Sriram Murali won 3rd Place in the Professional competition, Wildlife & Nature, Sony World Photography Awards 2023

Be in it to win it

Doing well in a prestigious photography competition can boost your career, give your work global exposure and earn you some decent prizes! Many competitions now charge an entry fee, but there are still a few that are free to enter. The Sony World Photography Awards is a great example (the Professional round closes soon). AP also runs an annual competition (APOY), with an additional free entry per round using a code printed in the magazine. Look out for the launch details of APOY 2024 in a future issue.

www.worldphoto.org, free;
www.amateurphotographer.com, one free entry with code

Go round in circles

In his book *The Accidental Creative: How to be Brilliant at a Moment's Notice*, Todd Henry talks about the importance of joining a group of fellow creatives. 'Small group meetings can stoke your passion, help you stay aligned with what matters most, inspire and give you new ideas or directions for projects,' he suggests. Meeting regularly with people who are willing to encourage you and offer constructive feedback is a great way to keep motivated – look up your local camera club, join an artist collective or start a creative circle of your own.



© PHIL PENMAN

Phil Penman will be speaking at the RPS later this month

Become a member

It took me a while to realise that you don't always have to be a fully paid-up member of a club or society to participate in some talks, events and workshops. The Royal Photographic Society (RPS), for example, hosts a range of events that are open to all. (On 18 January street photographer Phil Penman will be sharing his views in an online talk.) The Association of Photographers (AOP) also hosts talks that are open to non-members, while some camera clubs charge a small fee for non-members to join them for a workshop, talk or event.

www.rps.org; www.aopawards.com, free (or from £3)



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The Society of Photographers offers a free two-month trial

Go on trial

If you're thinking about joining a society or organisation but you'd like to try it out before you make a commitment, look out for trial memberships. The Society of Photographers, for example, offers two months' professional membership for free. Benefits of signing up to the society include competitions, access to a mentoring programme, a forum and photographic webinars. Also, plenty of software programs offer free trial periods including Zerene Stacker, Lightroom and Canva. Set a reminder on your calendar to tell you when the trial is up so you can make a decision ahead of the first payment.

www.thesocieties.net; www.zerenesystems.com; www.adobe.com; www.canva.com, free trial

Second-hand, hire, care and repair

Take care

According to Fjällräven, the more we use an item the more we develop a relationship with it, so that jacket that kept you warm on a mountaintop might well hold special memories in its fibres. To keep gear fighting fit, you've got to treat it right. Fjällräven has some care and repair videos on its website and Paramo offers a repair service for its kit (and a discount on new items if your old gear can't be repaired). Billingham also offers a



Fjällräven has some great product-care videos on its website

repair service for its camera bags. Spend a little time caring for your kit and it could save you pots of cash.

www.fjallraven.com;
www.paramo-clothing.com;
www.billingham.co.uk,
price varies

The market for preowned cameras is strong at retailers such as London Camera Exchange

© LONDON CAMERA EXCHANGE

Offer a second chance

Preowned camera equipment is big business. In recent years there's been a resurgence in film (and darkroom) use, which has given analogue kit a second life, and the market for top-of-the-range digital cameras is still strong. What's more, fast zoom lenses and primes are much in demand. When buying preowned, condition is everything. Buy from a reputable retailer, find out about the returns policy and the length/extent of the guarantee and take it for a test drive. (AP recently published an article on the best second-hand full-frame camera bargains.) <https://amateurphotographer.com/second-hand/second-hand-full-frame-bargains>

Take the hire road

If you want to try a big-budget piece of kit before committing yourself or you just need something for a one-off job, why not consider hiring? Services like Hire a Camera will lend you everything from medium-format cameras to top-of-the-range lenses and accessories including tripods, filters and memory cards. Some manufacturers will lend you gear and offer you a money-off voucher if you go ahead and buy it. Fujifilm even lends cameras and lenses out for 48 hours free of charge so you can try before you buy.

www.hireacamera.com, price varies; www.fujifilm-x.com, from free (bear in mind you will need to pay a security deposit when borrowing equipment)

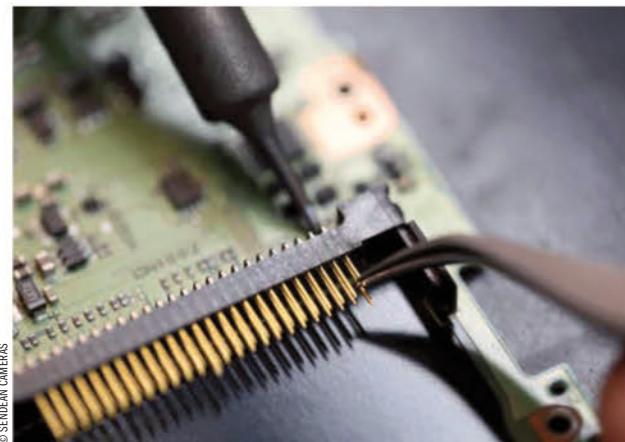


Regular camera care will help to keep everything working well

Protect to preserve

Protecting your kit from unforgiving environments will prolong its life and maintain its performance. When it comes to cameras and lenses the main threats are heat, dust, condensation, water, extreme cold, and human neglect. Regular camera care will help to keep everything in tip-top condition. Canon has a good basic care video on YouTube and there's a great camera maintenance guide on the AP site too. If your gear has developed a serious problem, take it to a service centre approved by your camera or lens manufacturer.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q_C-0lcrk3w;
amateurphotographer.com/technique/expert-advice/camera-maintenance-how-to-clean-camera, free



Sendeans Cameras has been repairing kit since 1926

Don't despair, repair

I've spoken to enough camera manufacturers and retailers over the years to know that there are certain repairs you shouldn't attempt at home (the rise in 'how-to' videos has led to a rush of people taking things apart and not being able to put them back together!). However, if your camera starts misbehaving, don't write it off. There are plenty of camera repair shops and services available – Sendeans Cameras, for example, uses 3D printing to make parts that are no longer available.

www.sendeancameras.co.uk, quote £6 per item

Cheap project ideas

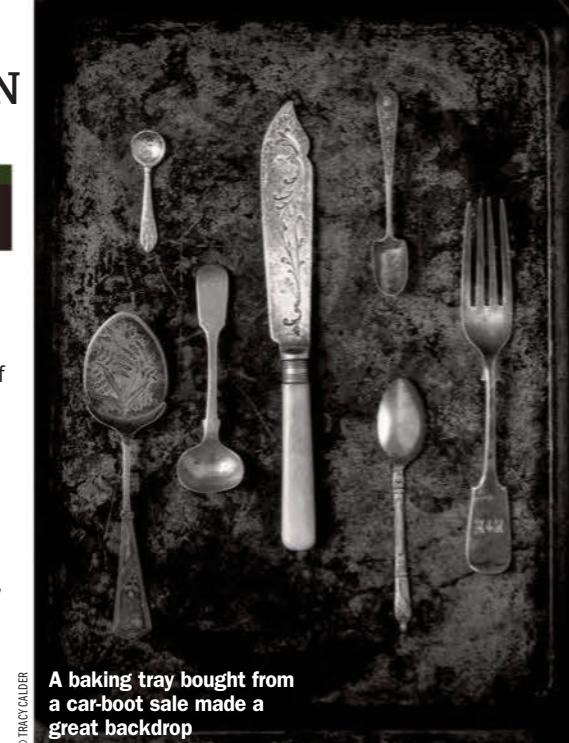


Set yourself a project with clear limitations

Send some flowers

During the first Covid lockdown I ordered myself a bunch of flowers and challenged myself to photograph it in 30 different ways during a 24-hour period. Setting strict boundaries really helped to keep me focused. I sketched a few ideas in a notebook, worked out which blooms might wilt first (freezing a few petals in an ice cube tray) and set to work. I really enjoyed raiding my props cupboard, looking at what worked and learning from what didn't.

Instagram: @tracy_calder_photo, price of bouquets varies



A baking tray bought from a car-boot sale made a great backdrop

© TRACY CALDER

Pocket the difference

Head out with £10 in your pocket and buy something (or go somewhere) to improve your photography.

Whether you purchase a vintage prop, a gadget, a book, a train ticket or a coffee for an artist friend (listening is free, after all), use the exercise to prove to yourself that creativity needn't be costly. Some of my favourite haunts are charity shops and Oxfam bookshops.

onlineshop.oxfam.org.uk, £10 (or less)

Indulge yourself

Shoot a series of self-portraits, without appearing in any of the pictures. Think about the physical imprint you leave behind in your home: the indent on a bed, the hair in a brush, the leftover food on a plate, and use this as your inspiration. Next, take a series of portraits with your face (or part of your body) in the picture. For inspiration look at the work of Vivian Maier, Francesca Woodman and Jo Spence.

www.vivianmaier.com; www.woodmanfoundation.org; www.britishphotography.org, free

Adopt a bird's-eye view

When I first started playing around with flat-lay photography (shooting carefully arranged objects from above) it was just for fun, but as I worked away, I found it taught me so much about composition, balancing positive and negative space and using colour for maximum impact. It was also surprisingly calming! Anything in large quantities can look good, but it helps to tell a story of some kind. Gathering berries, leaves or twigs from the same tree, for example, can say such a lot about a location. For inspiration, I look at paintings, graphic art and,



What grows together goes together

of course, photographers and artists such as Mary Jo Hoffman and Philippa Stanton.

Instagram: @tracy_calder_photo; @maryjohhoffman; @5ftinf, free

In 2021 I started a photo project entitled Plant Scars



Set yourself a project

Creating a coherent set of pictures can be challenging, but it's a great way to learn about sequencing, storytelling, editing and defining the purpose of your work. In 2021 I started a photo project entitled Plant Scars and it proved to be a great way of refining my skills. It's important to edit tightly – including an image just because you feel emotionally attached to it might not be enough if you plan to share your project with a wider audience. Each picture must earn its place. **Free**



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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR



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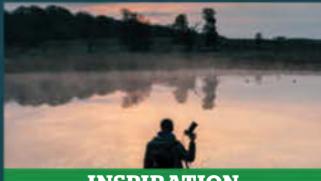
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Tree tops

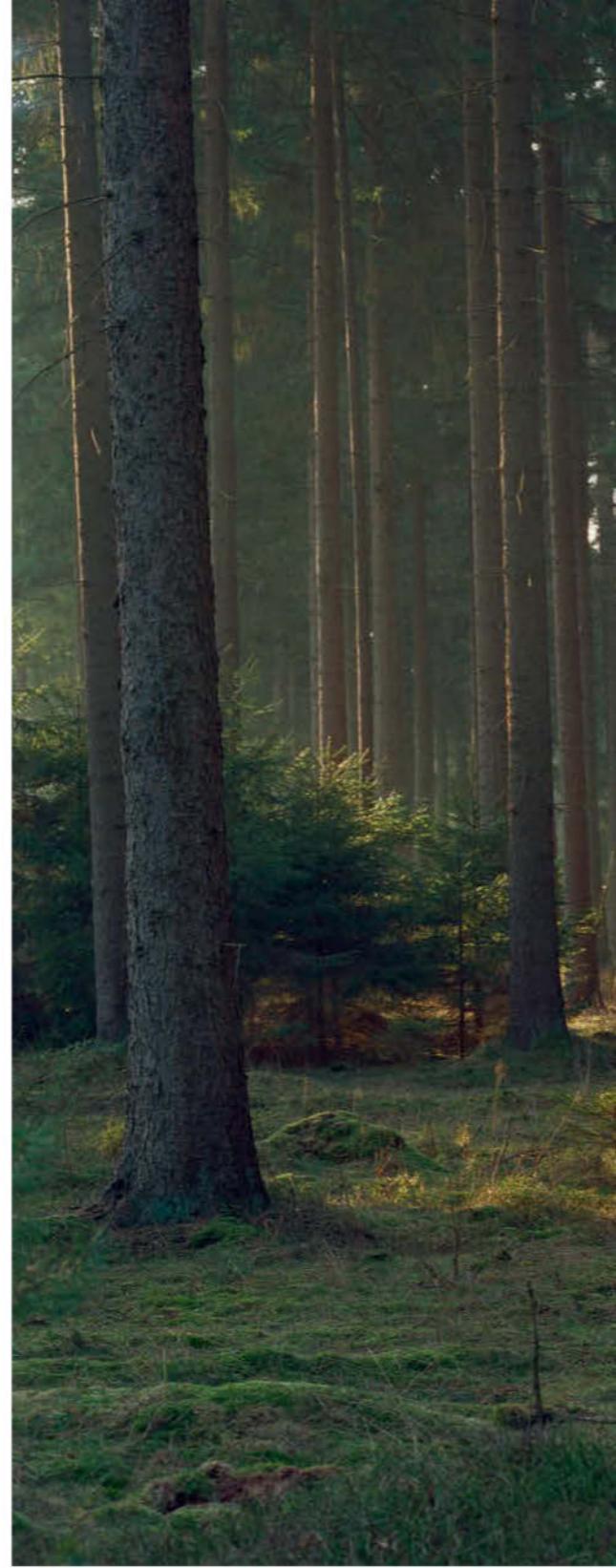
The photos of trees in an exquisitely bound book have a strong slant towards more unusual projects that capture a wealth of forms, landscapes and ecosystems. **Peter Dench** takes a look

Looking At Trees: New Photography of Trees, Forests & Woodlands by Sophie Howarth is a big hardback book. 237x285mm. 224 pages. I know what you may be thinking so let's clear that up. The publisher, Hoxton Mini Press, plants at least one tree for the order of this book and all its books are carbon offset. Throughout the pages the reader is introduced to the work of 24 photographers of varying nationalities who've committed part of their career to chronicling timber. The pages take the viewer across the globe from the UK, USA, Madagascar, Morocco, Tonga, Sicily, Australia, Germany, Japan and South Africa. From the jungles of Brazil to valleys of Romania. Canadian forests to lava fields of Iceland.

It's a book packed full of emotion, hope, joy, beauty, grief and rage. An eye-popping and eclectic exploration into a species that evolved 350 million years before us. It's a book of dedication and method. Photographer Einar Örn has been photographing one solitary century-old Icelandic Birch (Bjork) in the west of Iceland from a similar position for over 12 years. The birch takes us on a journey

through the seasons and hues, from snow-covered branches to spring buds. After a spell of serious illness, to aid photographer Alexandre Miguel Maia's recovery, he took to the German forests, repeatedly wandering through the heaths and wetlands, taking his time, absorbing the surroundings. In 2004 David Spero began photographing a small number of communities and individuals in Britain exploring ecologically sustained, low-impact ways of living. A fire pit, chicken run, compost toilet and unique dwellings are pictured in kinship with woodland.

UK-based Brazilian photographer Letitia Valverdes has two decades' experience working in the Amazon. Locked down during the Covid-19 pandemic with three primary-school-aged children, as the Amazon continued to burn and Brazil's then president Jair Bolsonaro continued to lobby for damaging constitutional amendments that would dismantle existent environmental laws, Valverdes felt compelled to educate her children about the ongoing ecocide and genocide. 'More than arithmetic and times tables I wanted my kids to know that the Amazon and its people are in great danger,



Left: And Now My Children Know: Interventions on a photograph (Brazilian Amazon, 2004), UK, 2020 © Letícia Valverdes

that the attack and disregard for the forest and its people takes place in different ways and on several fronts, and if we do not do something now this incredible ecosystem will have collapsed by the time they are adults,' she says.

Valverdes printed images from her Amazon archive and together they transformed them using gold, blood, earth and leaves collected from a





jungle adventure. 'We also burnt some of the pictures to symbolise the massive fires we were seeing on the news. Through the process we discussed, in an age-appropriate manner, what are the threats and challenges facing the region. I hope to have sensitively educated them to this imminent tragedy, while trying to articulate some of my own emotions felt in relation to the

Above: Enter the Forest: Heidegrund, Lüneburger Heide, Germany, 2015
© Alexandre Miguel Maia

situation,' she explains.

The book is aesthetically diverse and delivers lesson after lesson in photographic technique. Committed city-dweller Sue Bailey used available light to communicate her love of nature and the city and the complexity of the relationship. In her series Night Trees NY, New York trees are illuminated by street lights, traffic lights, lights from buildings

and signs, light from passing cars, and the light of the moon. Paul Hart used large- and medium-format film cameras to portray an ageing pine forest plantation in Derbyshire. Through traditional darkroom printing processes the final black & white images are pin-sharp with rich blacks that draw the viewer's eye deep into the copse. Beth Moon applied a 19th-century process



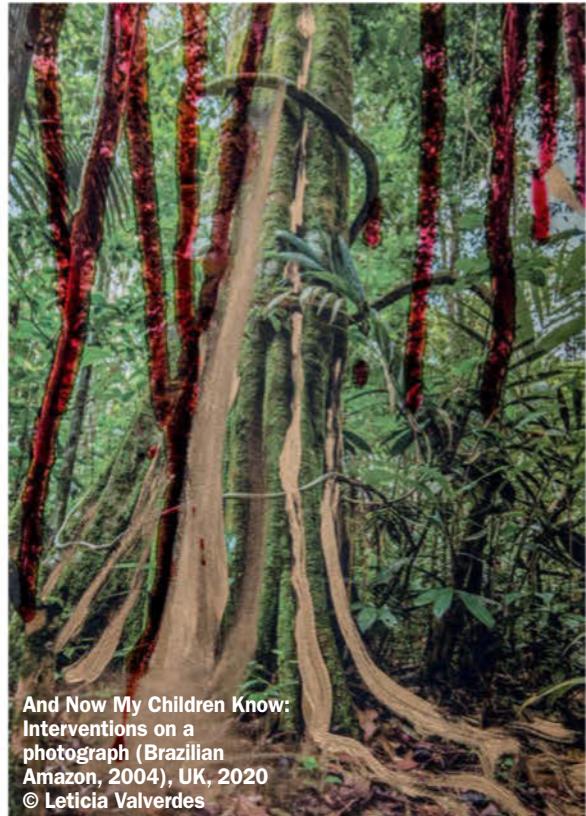
Night Trees NY: Universe, West 93rd Street, New York, USA, 2014 © Sue Bailey

technique to render the baobabs of Madagascar, red cedar of Wales and kapok tree in Florida. For each print Moon mixes ground platinum and palladium metals to make a tincture that is hand-coated onto heavy watercolour paper and exposed to light. The metals used are more stable than gold. 'By using the longest-lasting photographic process, I hope to speak about survival, not only of man and nature's but also to photography's survival,' says Moon.

'Cherry blossoms are so beautiful that I don't think I've spent as much time looking at anything else. Facing a sakura tree my eyes shift from one petal to another from one flower to another until the whole picture is grasped. In *SAKURA* – published by The (M) editions / Ibasho, 2021 – I attempt to visualise the move of my observing eyes and crystallise the visual experience of meditating and wandering upon the blooming tree. As a result the images show that photography captures not only a specific moment but also the passing of time,' states Japanese

photographer Yoshinori Mizutani. The blurred effect of his cherry blossom creations are achieved using a strobe light moving the camera around the trees.

Richard Mosse fitted a multispectral camera to a drone which flew over areas of deforestation, pollution and mining of the Brazilian Amazon, capturing bandwidths of reflected light often invisible to the human eye. Geographic Information Software then interpreted the spectral bands, containing environmental data and assigned them into the visible RGB colour space. The final large-scale archival pigment prints are spectacular. 'Some are incredibly aesthetic, producing rich lipstick reds and purples along the riverbanks of a charred forest, showing quite clearly the stress to remaining plant life, some of which was half-burned, and in the process of dying. The colours are often quite electric, yet, articulated over such highly detailed organic landscapes, the resulting images feel very fragile. This work conveys



And Now My Children Know:
Interventions on a
photograph (Brazilian
Amazon, 2004), UK, 2020
© Leticia Valverdes

frangible organic matter dominated by extractive violence at the hand of man. They are living maps, showing signs of life, but evoke die-back, tipping points and ecocide,' he writes.

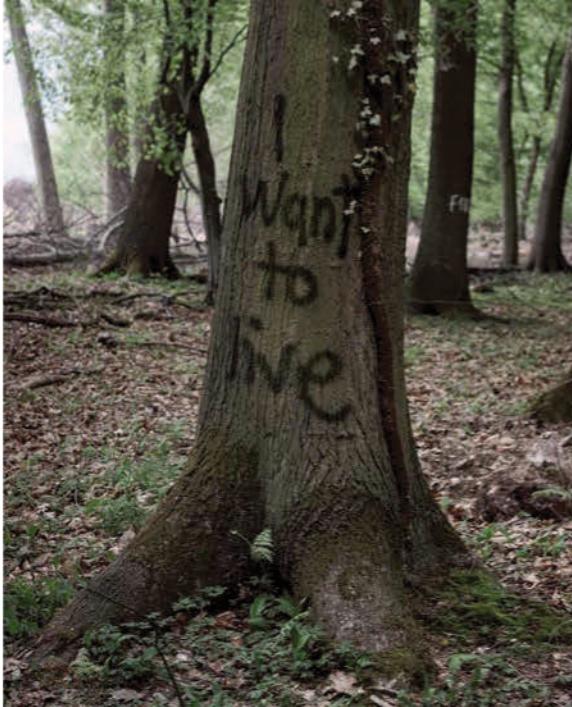
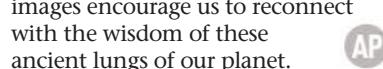
'I feel a deep reverence for their unique nature as I create my images. For me, trees represent the connection between energy (air, light) and the material world (soil, earth)', reveals photographer Christophe Franke. For his Tree Crowns series, he digitally stitches together 20 to 30 photos of a selected tree, removing the sky and any background obstructions to leave a neutral backdrop. He then flips the image. 'I opted to position the treetops upside down in the final work, just as they are projected onto our retina initially. Reversed in that way, the images remind me of roots, medicinal illustrations of a human lung, a family tree or a symbolic tree of life, as they appear in ancient traditional weavings.'

Permanently bloomed

For Robert Voit's series there are no trees at all. Voit travelled with a 5x4in field camera to the USA, South Africa, Europe, Israel and even North Korea in search of what he calls New Trees, cellular phone antennae of steel, fibreglass and plastic, camouflaged as trees and cacti. These permanently bloomed solitary structures are pictured towering over neighbourhoods and rusting in the desert.

Trees inhabit our lives from birth. They are a common fairytale setting in nursery school story books. They are scribbled in pictures with a brown trunk and green bushy top displayed proudly on a parent's fridge. They are conspicuous in art, pop songs, poems, films, literature and news bulletins. Ashes of the dearly departed are scattered around trees, saplings are planted in memory of them, benches are positioned in parks along tree-lined paths.

We all walk past trees every day but how often do we really stop and look? In a rapidly changing world, it's more important than ever to consider our relationship with nature. *Looking At Trees* brings together some of the world's best contemporary photography whose images encourage us to reconnect with the wisdom of these ancient lungs of our planet.



Beyond the Forest: Graffiti in the Hambach Forest, Germany, April 2013 © Marc Wendelski



Before It's Gone: Cluster of palm trees, Taneest Oasis, Morocco, March 2021 © MHAMMED KLILO



Looking at Trees. Text by Sophie Howarth. Published by Hoxton Mini Press, price £35

Looking At Trees - Top Tips

The book shows us what we think about trees in different ways. It's an education in looking and an opportunity to reevaluate what it means to have trees in our lives. Trees are accessible to all of us, all year. Useful tips can be harvested from each of the book's featured photographers and images.

Plan ahead: Get to know the seasons of the area you want to photograph and how the light behaves at different times of day and where. Use apps to plan shots at home or on location such as PhotoPills and The Photographer's Ephemeris to see exactly where the sun, moon, or Milky Way is going to appear in the frame.

Lighting: Nature doesn't have to be lit naturally; use strobe lighting, flash or available shops and street lights to add a sense of drama and mystery to your images.

Scale: Juxtapose trees with people, or other structures for scale.

Technology: From 19th-century processes to drones, consider what technologies will make your tree photography more impactful. Use a long lens in dense wood to create a dramatic perspective.

Familiarity: Photograph the same tree for a year.

Presentation: Displaying your photos of trees in diptychs, triptychs and polyptychs can emphasise the height and breadth of trees that are too complicated to capture with a single perspective and frame.

Detail: Focus on one element of a tree, a leaf or root. Take fallen tree parts back to the home tabletop or studio, isolate them to create a still-life story.

Tamper: Rip, shred, burn or add materials to your photographic print.

City dwellers: Don't assume you have to travel to the countryside, woodland or forest for spectacular opportunities. City trees are abundant, there are an estimated 8.4 million trees across London, nearly one for each of its 8.6 million residents.

Current affairs: Check the news to see if trees are in danger and use them as a peg for a reportage.

Remember Swampy?

Proactivity: Photograph trees today as they might be gone tomorrow.

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LETTER OF THE WEEK

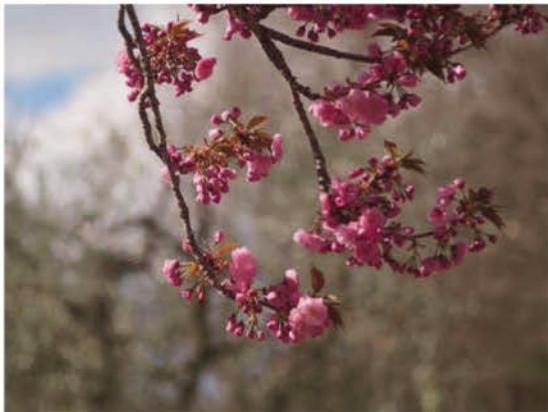
Vintage lens advice

The September 12 edition of AP included an article on vintage lenses.

If you're thinking of buying, you need to be aware that vintage lenses will have been designed to fit either

rangefinders (RF) or SLRs. The latter are designed to sit further from the film in order to leave room for the mirror. If you're using a mirrorless digital camera, adapters are available for either type of lens, but if you're using a DSLR you can only use SLR lenses, eg M42 mount. Some, but not all, vintage lenses will be available in both SLR and RF variants, eg M42 and Leica Thread Mount (LTM) – you need to make sure you buy the right one!

Many readers may be interested in



Taken by Richard Paterson on an Olympus E-PL3 Micro Four Thirds, and a Jupiter 11: 135mm at f/4 (fully open)

trying vintage lenses but not inclined to spend three-figure sums to do so. Although prices have gone up over the years, all of my lenses are still available for reasonable amounts on eBay and possibly elsewhere. As I write there are examples on sale from as little as £15 or so. The adapters I have used have all been fairly cheap Chinese ones (£10 or so), either Pixco or unbranded, and they worked okay. I hope my comments may be of use to someone.

Richard Patterson

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The wrong kind of fingers

Recently you asked what readers thought about electronic viewfinders. In general I don't like them. I much prefer an optical viewfinder any day. But touchscreens? Whoever thought they were a good

idea? I have always found them a total pain. If I press a button on my camera I get a response; if I press a touchscreen generally nothing happens, and only after repeated pressing do I sometimes get a response. It seems I have the wrong kind of fingers.

It's one of the reasons I don't have a smartphone.

Douglas Thomson

I don't have any problem using smartphones, but I confess I virtually never use the touchscreen on my camera. Indeed I forgot that it even has one. What do other

readers think about touchscreens on cameras. Do you use them? And if so, what for?

Third-party lens bargains

AP is fantastic at publishing comprehensive reviews of lenses from camera manufacturers and long-established lens makers such as Sigma. Back in June 2023 you also published a fascinating article on 'alternative lenses'.

One important aspect seems to be overlooked: there are many other lenses that have become available from emerging new manufacturers at very reasonable prices. For example: For my Fujifilm X-Pro2 I bought a 27mm f/2.8 lens by TTartisan at a much better price than Fuji's own equivalent lens. The titanium colour of the TTartisan lens goes very well with the graphite finish of my X-Pro2, and the results look very good too, at full aperture giving just the right amount of background bokeh as needed, as the canal portrait of my daughter shows (below).

But how do such budget lenses stand up technically against those from the camera manufacturers? It would be great to see some of them reviewed by your team, please.

Adrian Johnson



Adrian is pleased with the background bokeh here

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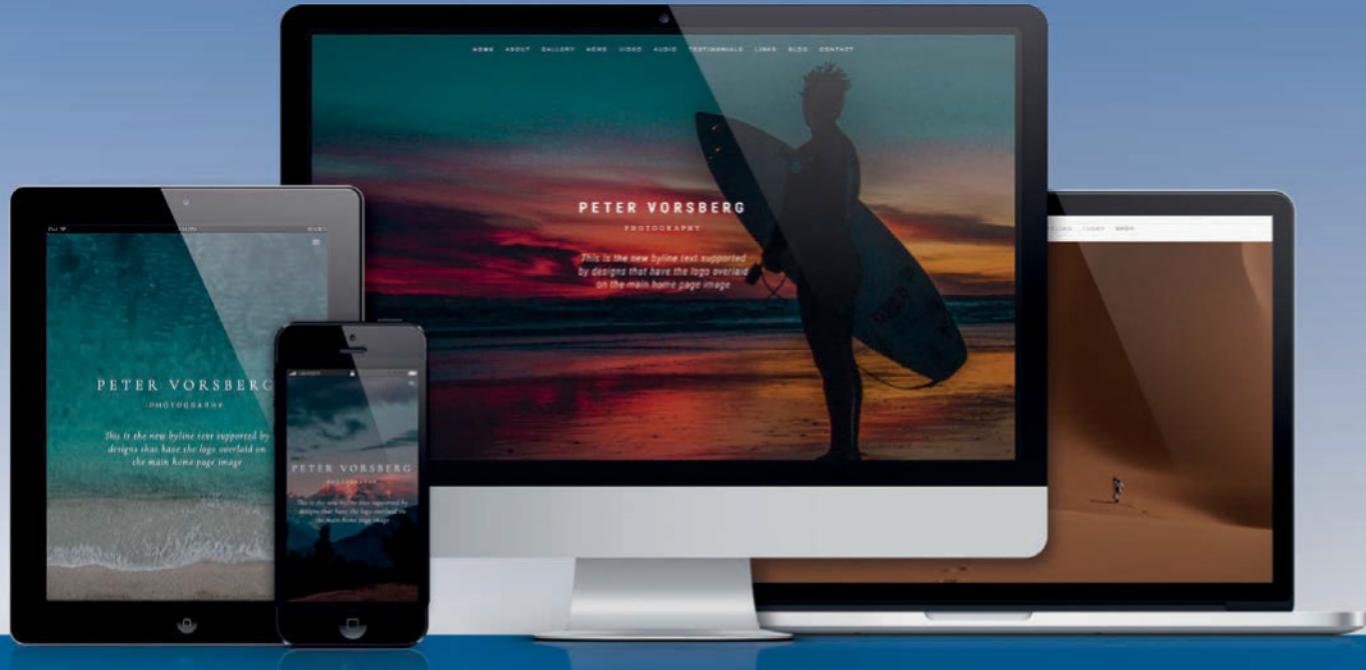




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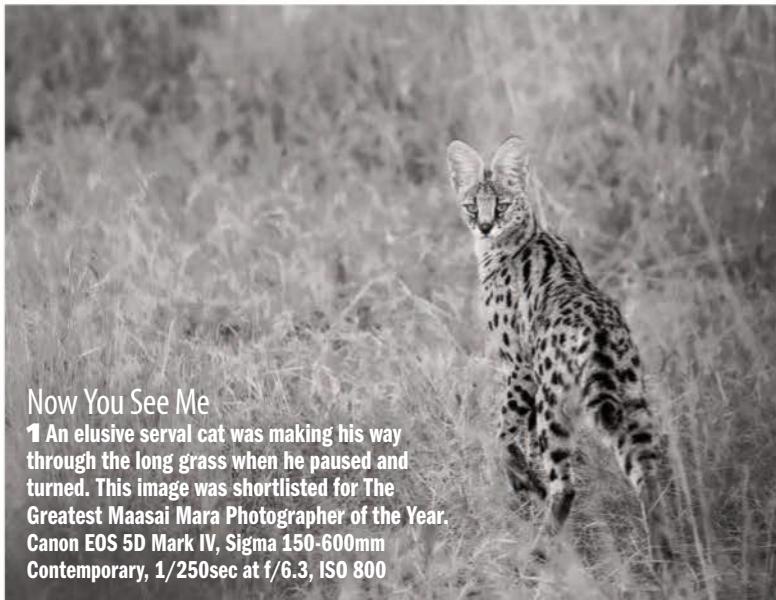
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Reader Portfolio

Spotlight on readers' excellent images and how they captured them



Now You See Me

1 An elusive serval cat was making his way through the long grass when he paused and turned. This image was shortlisted for The Greatest Maasai Mara Photographer of the Year.
Canon EOS 5D Mark IV, Sigma 150-600mm Contemporary, 1/250sec at f/6.3, ISO 800



2



3



4

C. Canon EOS R6 II, 100-500.

Favourite lens

Canon 70-200mm f/2.8.

Favourite accessory

My remote shutter release cable.

Dream purchase

A photographic trip to the polar region.

What software do you use for editing?

Lightroom. I sometimes use Nik Collection and I love Topaz Denoise.

Favourite photographers

A very long list but it would be hard not to mention Jonathan and Angela Scott.

Favourite photography books

The Heart of The Photograph by David duChemin.

Favourite tips

Find a genre that excites you and keep practising. When you feel a connection to something it will show. Other genres can help: my landscape photography experience helps me get better wildlife images. Gear isn't everything but an understanding of the basics and the vision behind the camera is – I took a lion portrait on a little point-and-shoot which was shortlisted for Wildlife POTY and I've had phone pics published online by National Geographic.

About your pictures

I love the Maasai Mara and try to go every year. I keep a lot of my images in colour but had a lot of contest success with b&w. They work well for prints.



**Tracy Miller,
Newcastle**

About Tracy

Tracy has recently returned to the UK after almost 12 years in Abu Dhabi and is hoping to earn an income from her photography. See instagram.com/tracymiller_photography

How did you get into photography?

When I set up my own studio for my jewellery design business I decorated on a shoestring with my images on the walls. People would buy my photos as well as my jewellery! I decided to take it more seriously when I moved overseas and had more time.

What do you love about photography?

Working with natural light and that I can capture a split second in time.

How where do you find inspiration?

My lifelong love of animals inspires me to want to capture their essence. I want us to care about the world outside our own backyard. I donate images to the campaigns of conservation organisations too.

Favourite subjects

Wildlife: their behaviour and social hierarchies fascinate me.

What was your first camera?

An Olympus compact, as a teenager.

Current kit

Canon EOS 5D Mark IV, 24-70mm f/4, 70-200mm f/2.8, Sigma 150-600mm

Reader Portfolio

winners receive a one-year subscription to a **Gold Portfolio Series website** worth £300. UK domain name included.

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Submit your images

See page 3 for details of how to submit. You could see your photos here in a future issue! Please note: the prize is subject to change.

Friendship

2 On seeing a large group of animals I like to wait and see which individuals interact with each other – their behaviour always makes for a story-telling image. These two zebra were apart a little from the main herd and displayed some lovely moments of affection and friendship after a spot of playtime. This image was shortlisted for The Greatest Maasai Mara Photographer of the Year.

Canon EOS 5D
Mark IV, Sigma
150-600mm
Contemporary,
1/1600sec at f/5.6,
ISO 800

Cheetah Portrait at Sunrise

3 I edited this image using very soft tones to complement the soft, dewy morning light. I softened the texture of the grass and brought up the shadows, adding a very slight glow on a slider in Nik Collection.

Canon EOS 5D
Mark IV, Sigma
150-600mm
Contemporary,
1/1000sec at
f/6.3, ISO 1000



5

What Greater Gift Than the Love of a Cat

4 I love to observe the interaction between lions. These two females were washing the rain off each other. I processed this image in soft black & white tones to complement the mood of the moment by decreasing texture, removing noise and increasing highlights. This image was shortlisted for The Greatest Maasai Mara Photographer of the Year.

Canon EOS 5D Mark IV, Sigma 150-600 Contemporary, 1/800sec, f/5.6, ISO 1000

Peekaboo

5 This lion cub was frolicking with his siblings. He paused to track the next distraction – his brother's tail. This is a really cropped-in image – even with a good zoom the cub was quite some distance from me. This image was shortlisted for The Greatest Maasai Mara Photographer of the Year and the Natural History Museum Wildlife Photographer of the Year.

Canon EOS 80D, Sigma 150-600mm Contemporary, 1/250sec at f/5.6, ISO 100

Lens and perspective corrections in Affinity Photo 2

Your photos can suffer from both lens distortion and perspective distortion. Rod Lawton explains the difference and how to fix them in Affinity Photo 2

Sometimes photos have distortion and perspective issues. You can get barrel distortion from wideangle lenses and perspective distortion from converging verticals. These are actually two separate things, and while Affinity Photo has lens-correction profiles which can fix lens distortion, any kind of perspective distortion is something you have to fix yourself.

Perspective distortion is caused when you tilt the camera upwards to capture the full height of a tall building, for example, and is more prominent with wideangle lenses because these let you shoot from closer but you have to tilt the camera more.

The reason these two things are connected is that you need to fix any lens distortion before you can properly judge any perspective corrections.

If you shoot JPEG images, these typically have lens corrections applied in-camera, but if you shoot raw files it's different, because not every camera maker embeds a correction profile in its raw files, and it's up to the software to provide one of its own. That need not be a problem. When you open a raw file in Affinity Photo's Develop mode, check the Lens tab. You should see that Affinity Photo has found a matching lens profile that fixes any lens distortion automatically.



Sometimes, though, it won't find one – but there's another answer. Develop mode isn't the only place to fix distortion and perspective issues, and not necessarily the best, either. You can also fix distortion and perspective issues with Live Filters in the Photo Persona. You get more control, it's a

little more intuitive and it may fit in easier with your editing workflow.

The Live Filters approach can fix rogue uncorrected lens distortion too, which is especially useful if there is no correction profile for your lens. Here's a guide to how it works.

WALKTHROUGH



1 Affinity Photo lens correction profiles

Raw files open in Affinity Photo's Develop Persona, and if it has a matching lens correction profile it will apply it automatically. You can check by selecting the Lens panel. If the Lens profile menu displays the lens used, you should find that any barrel or pincushion distortion has been fixed.



2 Perspective correction in Develop mode

The strong converging verticals or perspective distortion here can be fixed with the sliders in the Lens panel. You have to do this manually, but it doesn't take long and it's easy enough to do by eye. You'll see soon enough, though, that this can leave blank wedges at the edges and distort the aspect ratio.



3 What if there's no correction profile?

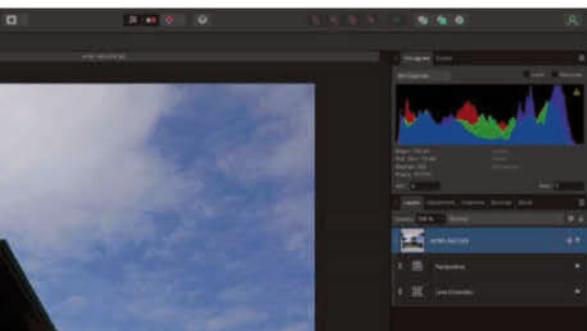
This photo presents a different problem. It was shot with the Canon RF 24-50mm F4.5-6.3 IS STM kit lens, and Affinity Photo doesn't have a correction profile for this. You can go looking for lens profiles with this drop-down menu, but if there was a profile for this lens, Affinity Photo would have found it.

Affinity Photo fixed any distortion in this image with an automatic lens correction profile, but it still had perspective issues, which we fixed with the Perspective Live Filter

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AFTER



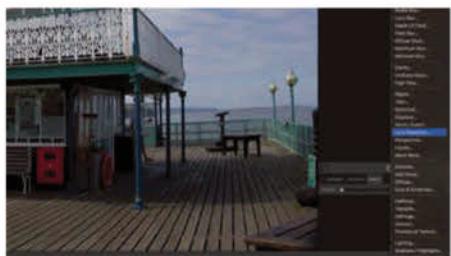
Top tip

Live Filter layer tips

When you add a Live Filter it appears with its own icon in the Layers palette. By default, your first Live Filter is attached to the current image layer and displayed alongside – you can also click on the disclosure arrow to display any attached Live Filters underneath. If you add a second Live

Filter as we did, this may appear above your current layer.

It doesn't matter here, but if you go on to add more layers below the image the Live Filter will affect these layers too, so you might want to confine the Live Perspective Filter to that image layer alone by dragging its icon on to the layer icon. Now both our Live Filters are attached to the image layer.



4 The Lens Distortion Live Filter

Sometimes it's easier to fix these problems in the Photo Persona. So let's click the Develop button. In the Photo Persona, we can start making use of Affinity Photo's Live Filters, and for this image we need the Lens Distortion filter. It won't be an exact match for the lens distortion, but it will be close enough.



5 Correcting lens distortion

Pushing the slider to the left counteracts the barrel distortion very effectively, and the trick is to push it just far enough that straight lines, especially those near the edge of the frame, actually look straight. It still looks a mess, though. We could crop the photo, but we can also correct this at the same time as fixing the converging verticals in the next step.



6 The Perspective Live Filter

The Perspective Live Filter adds four corner handles to the image. By moving them outwards and up or down you can remove blank areas left over from the distortion correction, any corner shading in the original photo and correct converging verticals. You can even address shifts in the vertical aspect ratio.

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The Pixel 8 Pro's 'Night Sight' produces excellent results
Google Pixel 8 Pro, 12mm equiv, 1/8sec at f/2, ISO 419



Google Pixel 8 Pro

Is this flagship smartphone for photographers good enough to topple Apple and Samsung?

Amy Davies finds out

There are two variants of the new Pixel 8 series: the Pixel 8 and the Pixel 8 Pro. Here we'll be concentrating on the flagship Pixel 8 Pro, which offers a triple-lens system, compared to the Pixel 8's dual lens. It brings a few interesting updates compared to the previous Pixel 7 Pro model, with improvements to both hardware and software. We'll discuss these further as we move through the review.

Features

As with its predecessor, the 8 Pro features a triple-lens set-up. While the focal lengths have remained the same, there are improvements in resolution and other specifications.

The main sensor has 50MP and is of the 1/1.31in type. That's the same as last year's, but the accompanying 25mm equivalent lens is now f/1.68. It is joined by two 48MP sensors. The 12mm ultrawide has an f/1.95 lens,

At a glance

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- 48MP ultrawide camera, 12mm equivalent, f/1.95
- 48MP 5x telephoto camera, 113mm equivalent, f/2.8
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compared to last year's 12MP and f/2.2 lens. There's also a 5x telephoto, which is similar in focal length to last year's model (113mm vs 120mm). It has the same size sensor, but the maximum aperture is now f/2.8, rather than f/3.5, so we can expect an improvement to



low-light performance. Digital zoom for the Pixel 8 Pro reaches 30x – again the same as last year. Meanwhile, the 10.5MP f/2.2 selfie camera now has autofocus.

In terms of software, for the first time Google has provided a 'Pro' mode,



Ultrawide (12mm equivalent)



1x (25mm equivalent)



5x (113mm equivalent)



30x digital zoom

This comparison illustrates the angles of view of the three main cameras, plus the maximum 30x digital zoom

which gives you controls over things like shutter speed and white balance. There are also various AI features, including 'Best Take' and 'Magic Editor' which allow for enhancements to photographs, such as swapping out faces in group shots.

The screen remains the same size, at 6.7in, but it's slightly different in shape. However, it has improved tough credentials and is brighter. The battery is 5050mAh and boasts both fast charging and wireless charging.

The Pixel 8 Pro was the first phone to feature Android 14, but

other models can now upgrade to the latest OS.

Handling and design

With its 6.7in screen, the Pixel 8 Pro is on the large side, but it matches other similar high-end smartphones, including the iPhone 15 Pro Max and its predecessor, the Pixel 7 Pro. The Samsung S23 Ultra is bigger, at 6.8in. Whether you like large phones is personal preference, but it's good for displaying your photos and videos well.

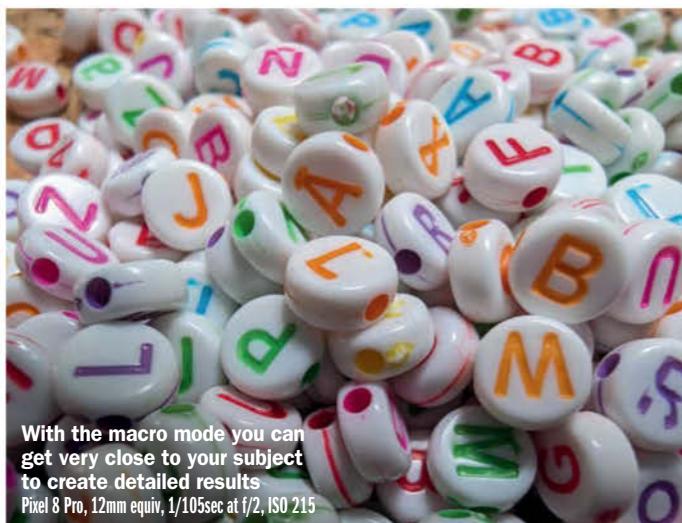
The overall dimensions come in at 162.6x76.5x8.8mm, which is very close to its predecessor, and it weighs 213g – just 1g more. The corners of the screen have been rounded, however, so it looks slightly different. The screen now uses Corning Gorilla Glass Victus 2, so it should withstand scratches even better than its predecessor – we haven't deliberately tried to gouge out anything in the screen, but it's withstood normal usage.

Flipping to the back of the phone, the cameras are found in a horizontal strip across the top. A new addition you'll notice in this strip is an extra cutout for a new sensor. This is a thermometer which you can use to measure how hot things are. It's nothing to do with the camera.

Camera app

In the past, Pixels have been like iPhones in terms of the simplicity of the camera app. But that has changed for the Pixel 8 series, which introduces a Pro mode for the first time. This can be reached by tapping an icon on the main Photo screen. You can then adjust white balance, shutter speed, and ISO. You can also engage manual focus, as well as switch on useful functions such as focus peaking. If you've made changes to different settings, you can quickly tap 'reset all' to go back to their default options.

Perhaps slightly confusingly, there are also separate Pro



With the macro mode you can get very close to your subject to create detailed results

Pixel 8 Pro, 12mm equiv, 1/105sec at f/2, ISO 215



Long Exposure mode creates effects like this handheld
Pixel 8 Pro, 24mm equiv, f/1.7, ISO 20

options available when swiping up in the main Photo mode. Here you can change the resolution from the default 12MP to 50MP, as well as switch on DNG raw shooting (you'll still get a JPEG).

Other settings can also be accessed by swiping up here, including switching on the timer, allowing macro focus to engage automatically, and changing the aspect ratio. More settings can be accessed in the main menu, such as switching on a grid.

In the main Photo mode, Night Sight should turn on when low light levels are detected. However, you can also activate it manually, which can be helpful in mixed lighting situations. As with the 7 Pro, an additional Astrophotography option can be used if you place the phone on a steady surface or tripod.

Another photo mode is Portrait, which enables you to capture shallow-depth-of-field effects. You can shoot at either 1.5x or 2x zoom. You can also combine Portrait mode with Night mode for capturing portraits in low light, and there are other options too, including face retouching.

Google makes use of AI technology for a couple of photo modes, including Long Exposure. This can be used to capture blur

with moving subjects, while keeping the background sharp. Similarly, there's also Action Pan, where the moving subject is kept still, with the background blurred to create a sense of movement that way. Both are incredibly easy to use – you just point the phone at a moving subject and it'll do the work for you. Some subjects work better than others, but being able to do this directly from your phone with very little intervention is impressive.

All of the video modes have been separated into a different tab. Here you'll find the standard Video mode, as well as other options such as Slow Motion, Time Lapse, and Pan (for panning video with smooth stabilisation).

A fair amount has been made of the Pixel 8 series' new editing tools, particularly Best Take and Magic Editor. You can erase objects, move them around the frame, or make them bigger or smaller. Sometimes it's very successful, other times less so. It's certainly worth experimenting with and can be useful for removing distracting elements. It does have some drawbacks, though – for example, it's quite slow to use and you'll need to back up all of your images to Google Photos first.

Best Take is a fun feature for group portraits and selfies. When you take a series of shots with multiple faces, you can head to the editor afterwards and select the best of the faces in one shot – perhaps somebody was blinking or looking miserable. Again, sometimes this works better than others. It can be confused by things like glasses, but generally it's a fun feature that can certainly 'save' a family photo that's gone awry and yet requires no special editing expertise.

Image quality

We have been continually impressed by the quality of imagery from the Pixel series, right from the very first model. The 8th generation builds on everything the previous models have done to produce the line's best images yet.

Shooting in good light yields the best results, with images that display a good level of detail, accurate exposure, and colours that strike an excellent balance between vibrant and realistic. Comparing it with models such as the iPhone 15 Pro Max, which tends to be a little flatter, and the Samsung S23 Ultra which goes far too vibrant, the Pixel 8 Pro sits neatly in the middle. What's

more, colour matching is excellent between the lenses.

In good light, the differences between the Pixel 7 Pro and 8 Pro aren't huge. On the whole they put in a fairly similar performance, especially from the main lens. However, I noticed that when using both side by side, on several occasions the 7 Pro cropped the main sensor when I thought it was shooting with the 5x lens. This never happened with the 8 Pro. As a result, the 8 Pro produces consistently better results at telephoto.

On the whole, the 5x lens is very good. Some might argue that it's too long compared to the 3x lenses you'll find on the S23 Ultra and the iPhone 15 Pro, but you can also shoot at 2x or 3x with the 1x lens (which will use the central portion of the sensor). My feeling is that it's good to have a dedicated lens for getting just that bit closer. Digital zoom is available up to 30x. Up to around 10x, results are usable; beyond that the images are too smudgy for anything but a record shot.

The ultrawide lens also produces more detail, and copes better in low light, as is to be expected from the jump in resolution and wider aperture. This also means that macro images are also better from the 8 Pro, as it uses the ultrawide lens. Here you'll find that close-up shooting yields some very detailed and impressive results.

When it comes to Portrait mode, there's not a dramatic improvement here from the previous generation. Considering how much AI usability Pixel models have, though, it's perhaps a surprise not to see some kind of automatic portrait recognition. But otherwise, the results are pretty good, with a natural drop-off between subject and background, particularly if you're only viewing on your phone screen. You can adjust both the strength of blur and the focus point after you've taken the picture, which comes in handy on the rare occasion there's been a misfire. But it's a shame not to have longer than a 2x option here, to get a bit closer and isolate your subjects.

The introduction of autofocus for the selfie lens



Portrait mode creates natural results, but it doesn't get you that close to the subject
Google Pixel 8 Pro, 24mm equiv, 1/70sec at f/1.7, ISO 20

means you get much sharper results. Arguably this makes them less flattering, but from a photographic point of view, it's hard to deny they're better. You can switch on Portrait mode for selfies to create a shallow-depth-of-field effect. The result is a bit unnatural here, and we've seen much better from the iPhone 15 Pro Max. But if you only intend to look at your selfies on a phone screen, the effect is not too bad.

In low light, we see excellent results. We thought the Pixel 7 Pro was very good, but it just goes to show that there are still

plenty of improvements that can be made. The wider-aperture lenses are surely helping here, with the sensors able to gather more light. But there's also no doubt some more advanced computational wizardry is on display, too. There's very little in the way of lens flare, which could sometimes be an issue with the 7 Pro, while in general, there's much more detail on show from images from the 8 Pro. It also compares very well with other flagships like the iPhone 15 Pro Max and the Samsung S23 Ultra. In short, if low light is your thing, the Pixel 8 Pro is one of the very best phone cameras you can currently buy.

Video performs very well too, with smooth results that are nicely detailed. Stabilisation works well at 4K 60fps, and with a range of other video options, it's a good choice for content creators who want lots of different styles to experiment with. No 8K video here, but that's still a niche requirement.

Value for money

The Pixel series has always been known for its excellent value for money, especially in relation to

Data file

Ultra-wide camera 48MP
Quad PD with AF,
12mm equivalent,
f/1.95 aperture

Wide camera
50MP Octa PD
with AF, 24mm
equivalent,
f/1.68 aperture

Telephoto camera
48MP with AF,
113mm equiv,
f/2.8 aperture

Selfie camera
10.5MP with AF,
f/2.2 aperture

Display
6.7in Super
Actua LTPO OLED,
1344x2992 px,
489ppi

Operating system
Android 14

Dimensions
162.6x76.5x
8.8mm

Weight 213g

Verdict

AFTER Apple phones and Samsung phones, Google Pixel phones seem to be the ones you see most often in people's hands. Perhaps this is confirmation bias based on their distinctive camera set-up, but either way, we often think of the Pixel series as being one of the 'big three' when it comes to the best smartphones for photographers.

Using a combination of excellent hardware and advanced software, the Pixel 8 Pro takes what the company has previously done and improved it even further. It produces excellent images in a wide range of conditions, and there's been a noticeable jump in image quality over its predecessor. This is often harder to spot from Apple and Samsung, where each update seems to be more gentle.

That said, if you've got a Pixel 7 Pro, there's probably no need to go out immediately and upgrade. Yes, the 8 Pro is better, with the main differences coming in low light or if you scrutinise fine detail at close quarters. There are also software improvements, such as the Pro Mode and Best Take – but how often you'll want to use those is questionable. If this is how good the 8 Pro is, you might also wonder how good the 9 Pro will be. Perhaps if you've got a 7 Pro already, it's better to wait.

If you're coming from a different brand altogether, the Pixel 8 Pro is likely to give you noticeably better pictures than you're used to. Unless, of course, you've already got another of the latest flagship devices.

Overall, there's a huge amount to like about the Pixel 8 Pro, and very little to dislike. It takes great pictures, is very pleasant to use and won't set you back quite the fortune that other flagship phones will.



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SECOND-HAND CLASSIC

Leica Q (Typ 116)

We look back at Leica's full-frame fixed-lens compact from 2015

The Leica Q was a game-changing camera. It successfully captured the essence of what it's like to use a Leica rangefinder – something that was lacking from the company's earlier digital compact cameras. With an optically stabilised 28mm f/1.7 lens and 24.2MP full-frame sensor offering an ISO range of 100-50,000, it quickly caught the attention of those searching for the ultimate go-anywhere compact. At the rear there's a superb 3.68m-dot built-in electronic viewfinder and 3in, 1.04m-dot touchscreen. Elsewhere there's a comprehensive set of features with the exposure and metering modes you'd expect, as well as a set of scene modes. It can shoot continuously at 10fps, Wi-Fi is present and there's video at full HD resolution (60p or 30p).

What we said

- 'The way that the camera operates as a sum of all its parts is what makes it a real pleasure to use.'
- 'When shooting wide open, images are still acceptably sharp and out-of-focus areas are smoothly rendered.'
- 'It's not until ISO 6,400 that noise becomes obtrusive.'
- 'The Leica Q's real strength lies in its handling, EVF and autofocus.'

How it fares today

The Leica Q has aged well, which is reflected in the second-hand prices you'll find on the used market. If you're into travel, street, documentary or landscape photography, the 24MP sensor will serve you brilliantly. It feels far from a camera that's eight years old and you immediately get the sense it's built to last from the moment you handle it. Battery life has since improved, though.

What to pay

As with all second-hand cameras, the price you can expect to pay for a used Leica Q varies depending on the state of its condition. An example described to be 'like new' will set you back £2,499, while excellent condition examples fetch around £2,399. Used working examples with signs of cosmetic wear, such as light scuffs to the body, tend to sell for £2,099.

New alternatives

The Q3 that arrived in 2023 features the same lens, control dials, and rangefinder-style body with a corner-mounted EVF. Key updates include a boost in resolution to 60MP; improved autofocus including phase detection and subject recognition; a tilting rear touchscreen; 15fps shooting; 8K video; and larger battery. But even a used example will set you back around £5,000.



The rear of the camera has a very simple layout. Five small buttons sit to the left of the screen, with a small directional control on the right

At a glance

£2,399
(excellent used condition)

- 24.2MP full-frame CMOS sensor
- ISO 100-50,000
- Leica Summilux-M 28mm f/1.7 ASPH lens
- 10fps continuous shooting
- 3.68-million-dot EVF

For and against

- + Incredibly sharp, stabilised fixed 28mm lens
- + Fast, accurate autofocus system
- + Easy to navigate and control
- + Superb image quality
- Level of customisation
- Battery life (300 shots)
- Touchscreen can't be fully disabled
- No weather-sealing

See over to find out what Leica Q owners have to say

What the owners think

Three Leica Q users give their verdict

Rob McCarthy

My first digital camera was the 2006 Leica M8, which opened my eyes to the dynamite world of Leica rangefinders and lenses. Ten years later, Leica released the Q and I've been shooting with it ever since. For me it's the right combination of size, weight, and image quality, plus the fixed 28mm lens is perfect for the vertical world of New York City.

I feel I'm doing my best work when I feel free and unencumbered by camera gear, and the Q delivers precisely this on the streets. The silent leaf shutter allows me to shoot discreetly amongst people and the focus ring movement is fast and smooth. Most days, I like to



Rob finds the fixed 28mm lens perfect for shooting in the city
Leica Q, 1/250sec at f/8, ISO 100

switch to monochrome mode, and take advantage of the Q's excellent tonal range. The grittiness and textures of the city really pop in black & white. And even though the sensor is eight years old by now, and being

lapped by much higher-resolution cameras, I'll continue to use the Q because it still makes picture-taking fun.

More of Rob's images can be found on Instagram @wrongrob, where he has 96k followers.

For and against

- + Reliable
- + Discreet, and unobtrusive
- + Tonal range
- Silent leaf shutter

Katerina Christina

Functioning as a true 'bread and butter' camera for street photographers, the Leica Q has always been my go-to piece of photographic equipment. Its fixed 28mm lens forces me to get close to the subject of my images, creating much more intriguing photographs and engagement with the environment. At the same time, the wide lens allows me to shift seamlessly into navigating the world of landscape photography.

The Leica Q has allowed me to merge these two worlds, exploring what has become the focus of my street photography series 'the quiet in the chaos'. With the Q's razor-sharp focus at f/1.7, I am able to isolate the subject of each photograph in stunning detail, while maintaining a visually compelling and complete backdrop. While the Q might be limiting in some disciplines, I have found it to be more than suitable for

Shooting at f/1.7 helps isolate the subject from the background

Leica Q, 1/1600sec at f/1.87 ISO 100



portraiture, product, documentary, and street photography, and hope to continue to use it for many years to come.

Katerina can be followed on Instagram @katerina_christina, where she has 10k followers.

For and against

- + Sharpness wide open at f/1.7
- Slightly slippery body



The Leica Q is great for shooting in black & white
Leica Q, 1/500sec at f/11, ISO 400

Morgan Miller

I'd have to say that the most fun I've ever had shooting with a camera has been with the Leica Q. The camera with all the fairy dust to attempt a little magic through modern digital imagery; that was the Leica Q. So quiet, stealthy and fast, so easy to manipulate with just enough control, there was nothing to stop me from creating some of my most memorable and favourite images. The energy, light, colour and stories I try to capture and develop in my imagery were matched with this heavenly mate.

I really couldn't have been happier with this fixed-focal-length compact dream catcher. And here's an interesting fact – excellent condition used examples of the Leica Q cost a little over £650 more than a Fujifilm X100V in mint condition. If I had to choose, I'd settle on the compact with the red dot on the front, even if it did cost me more.



Quiet and stealthy, the Q is perfect for candid shooting
Leica Q, 1/20sec at f/4, ISO 200

See Morgan's images on Instagram @morganmiller7777, where he has 15.5k followers.

For and against

- + Quiet and stealthy
- Need to carry several spare batteries

Vallerret Milford Photography Gloves

Vallerret's Milford gloves are a great choice for photographers during the colder months of the year. **Angela Nicholson** has been trying them out

● €69.95 (approx £60.60) ● photographygloves.com

Vallerret offers an extensive range of gloves designed for photographers. These Milford gloves sit towards the lower end of its lineup in terms of warmth. However, they're constructed from Polartec Windbloc Fleece, which gives them an exceptionally cosy and soft feel, making them a pleasure to wear. Their design isn't just about comfort, though, as functionality is also a key consideration.

Firstly, on each glove, two fingers and the thumb have flip-back tips which can be secured by an elastic loop. This ingenious design allows photographers to access their camera controls directly, ensuring that it's easy to press buttons and rotate dials in cold conditions. The stretchy nature of the fabric means that the finger and thumb tips are easy to pull back. If you're just taking a quick snap, the tips will stay out the way of their own accord, but the elastic loops are useful when you're holding your camera for a longer period.

Each glove also comes with a 10K water-repellent ripstop outer shell, that can be slipped over the fleece glove to give additional protection from cold conditions and rain. When these shells are not in use, they can be stored in the pocket on the back of each of the fleece gloves. Conveniently, this keeps the gloves and shells together, but it means the backs of the gloves are a little bulkier than they would be otherwise. That extra bulk can make it harder to pull sleeves down over the gloves, and consequently, the gloves can push down your hands, but it's not a major problem.

The shell gloves don't have flip-back finger or thumb caps, but I still find I can adjust most of the settings on a camera when wearing them. It just feels a little more cumbersome.

Vallerret has also incorporated a non-slip grip pattern across the palm of each of the fleece gloves. While this is designed to give greater purchase on a camera, I'm not sure it makes much difference as my fingers tend to do the work.

Verdict

The Milford Gloves are intended for 'mild winter' conditions and I found them ideal during a recent cold snap with chilly winds and temperatures down to -1° or -2°C. They aren't as stiff as Vallerret's gloves with leather elements, which makes them more comfortable to wear. Consequently, they have become my go-to gloves for anytime outdoors and days out with my camera.



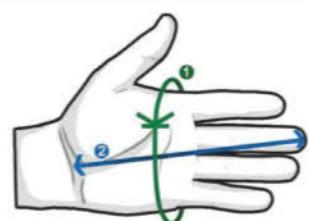
**Amateur
Photographer**
Testbench
Recommended
★★★★★

At a glance

- Polartec Windbloc Fleece
- Designed for 'mild winter'
- Water-repellent shell glove
- Touchscreen-compatible index finger and thumb tips
- Flip-Tech finger caps on thumb, index & middle finger

SIZE

The size chart on Vallerret's website offers a good guide to ordering the gloves that you need. This takes both the circumference and length of your hand into account, as shown. I opted for a size small, which proved to be a good fit.





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Buying Guide

192
lenses
listed &
rated

Our comprehensive listing of key specifications for DSLR lenses

DSLR Lenses

Interchangeable lenses come in a huge array of types for shooting different kinds of subjects

IN GENERAL, the easiest way to expand the kinds of pictures you can take is by buying different types of lenses. For example, telephoto lenses let you zoom in on distant subjects, while macro lenses enable close-ups of small objects. Large-aperture lenses allow you to isolate subjects against blurred backgrounds, or shoot in low light without having to raise the ISO too high. Meanwhile, all-in-one superzooms cover a wide range of subjects, but usually with rather lower optical quality.



Lens mounts

Each manufacturer has its own lens mount and most aren't compatible with one another. For example, a Canon DSLR can't use Nikon lenses, although you can use independent brands if you get them with the right mount.

Built-in focus motor

Most lenses now incorporate an internal motor to drive the autofocus, although some are still driven from the camera body. DSLR lenses often use ultrasonic-type motors for fast focusing, but some now have video-friendly stepper motors as widely used in mirrorless systems.

Filter thread

A thread at the front of the camera will have a diameter, in mm, which will allow you to attach a variety of filters or adapters to the lens.

Maximum aperture

Wider apertures mean you can use faster, motion-stopping shutter speeds.

OUR GUIDE TO THE SUFFIXES USED BY LENS MANUFACTURERS

AF	Nikon AF lenses driven from camera
AF-S	Nikon lenses with Silent Wave Motor
AF-P	Nikon lenses with stepper motors
AL	Pentax lenses with aspheric elements
APD	Fujifilm lenses with apodisation elements
APO	Sigma Achromatic lenses
ASPH	Aspherical elements
AW	Pentax all-weather lenses
CS	Samyang lenses for APS-C cropped sensors
D	Nikon lenses that communicate distance info
DA	Pentax lenses optimised for APS-C-sized sensors
DC	Nikon defocus-control portrait lenses

DC	Sigma's lenses for APS-C digital
DG	Sigma's designation for full-frame lenses
Di	Tamron lenses for full-frame sensors
Di-II	Tamron lenses designed for APS-C DSLRs
Di-III	Tamron lenses for mirrorless cameras
DN	Sigma's lenses for mirrorless cameras
DO	Canon diffractive optical element lenses
DT	Sony lenses for APS-C-sized sensors
DX	Nikon's lenses for DX-format digital
DS	Canon's Defocus Smoothing technology
E	Nikon lenses with electronic apertures
E	Sony lenses for APS-C mirrorless

ED	Extra-low Dispersion elements
EF	Canon's lenses for full-frame DSLRs
EF-S	Canon's lenses for APS-C DSLRs
EF-M	Canon's lenses for APS-C mirrorless
EX	Sigma's 'Excellent' range
FA	Pentax full-frame lenses
FE	Sony lenses for full-frame mirrorless
G	Nikon lenses without an aperture ring
HSM	Sigma's Hypersonic Motor
IS	Canon's Image-Stabilised lenses
L	Canon's 'Luxury' range of high-end lenses
LD	Low-Dispersion glass
LM	Fujifilm Linear Motor
MP-E	Canon's high-magnification macro lens
OIS	Optical Image Stabilisation
OS	Sigma's Optically Stabilised lenses
PC-E	Nikon tilt-and-shift lenses
PF	Nikon Phase Fresnel optics
PZD	Tamron Piezo Drive focus motor
RF	Canon full-frame mirrorless lenses
S	Nikon's premium lenses for mirrorless
SAM	Sony Smooth Autofocus Motor
SDM	Pentax's Sonic Direct Drive Motor
SMC	Pentax Super Multi Coating

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DSLR Lenses

LENs	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY	IMAGE STABILISATION	SONY ALPHA	CANON	FOUR THIRDS	Nikon	PENTAX	SIGMA	FULL FRAME	MIN FOCUS (CM)	FILTER THREAD (MM)	DIAmETER (mm)	LENGTH (mm)	WEIGHT (g)	
CANON DSLR										MOUNT					DIMENSIONS		
EF-S 10-18mm f/4.5-5.6 IS STM	£299	4★	A superb ultra-wideangle that's a must-have for anyone shooting landscapes and cityscapes	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	22	67	74.6	72	240
EF-S 10-22mm f/3.5-4.5 USM	£990	4★	A good performer, with solid MTF curves and minimal chromatic aberration	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	24	77	83.5	89.8	385
EF-S 17-55mm f/2.8 IS USM	£795	4★	Very capable lens with three-stop image stabilisation, Super Spectra coating and a circular aperture	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	35	77	83.5	110.6	645
EF-S 18-55mm f/4.5-5.6 IS STM	£220		Latest standard zoom for Canon's APS-C EOS DSLRs, with compact design and updated optics	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	25	58	66.5	61.8	215
EF-S 18-135mm f/3.5-5.6 IS USM	£500		Versatile zoom with new Nano USM focus technology and optional power zoom adapter	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	39	67	77.4	96	515
EF-S 24mm f/2.8 STM	£165	4★	Bargain price, tiny carry-everywhere size and a highly competent imaging performance	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	16	52	68.2	22.8	125
EF-S 55-250mm f/4-5.6 IS STM	£265		A compact telephoto lens featuring smooth, quiet STM focusing when shooting movies	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	110	58	70	111.2	375
EF 8-15mm f/4 L USM	£1499		Impressive-looking fisheye zoom lens from Canon	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	15	n/a	78.5	83	540
EF 11-24mm f/4 L USM	£2799	5★	Long-awaited by Canon full-frame users, this is the world's widest-angle rectilinear zoom lens	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	28	n/a	108	132	1180
EF 16-35mm f/2.8 L III USM	£2150		Revamped wideangle zoom includes new optics in a weather-sealed lens barrel	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	28	82	89.5	127.5	790
EF 16-35mm f/4 L IS USM	£1199	4★	Versatile and with a useful IS system, this is a very good ultra-wideangle zoom for full-frame cameras	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	28	77	82.6	112.8	615
EF 17-40mm f/4 L USM	£940	4★	Designed to match the needs of demanding professionals – and does so with ease	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	28	77	83.5	96.8	500
EF 24mm f/1.4 L II USM	£2010		Subwavelength structure coating, together with UD and aspherical elements	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	25	77	83.5	86.9	650
EF 24-70mm f/2.8 L II USM	£2300	5★	Professional-quality standard zoom lens with a fast aperture	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	38	82	88.5	113	805
EF 24-105mm f/4 L IS II USM	£1129	4★	Reworked workhorse zoom for full-frame cameras uses an all-new optical design	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	45	77	83.5	118	795
EF 35mm f/2 IS USM	£799		First 35mm prime from Canon to feature an optical stabilisation system	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	24	67	62.6	77.9	335
EF 35mm f/1.4 L II USM	£1799	5★	An outstanding addition to the L-series line-up	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	28	72	80.4	104.4	760
EF 50mm f/1.2 L USM	£1910		Very wide maximum aperture and Super Spectra coatings, and a circular aperture	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	45	72	85.8	65.5	580
EF 50mm f/1.4 USM	£450	5★	Brilliant performer, with a highly consistent set of MTF curves. AF motor is a tad noisy, though	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	45	58	73.8	50.5	290
EF 50mm f/1.8 STM	£130	5★	Lightest EF lens in the range, with wide maximum aperture and a Micro Motor	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	35	49	69.2	39.3	130
EF 70-200mm f/2.8 L USM	£1540		Non-stabilised L-series optic, with rear focusing and four UD elements	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	150	77	84.6	193.6	1310
EF 70-200mm f/2.8 L IS III USM	£2150		Updates Canon's excellent pro workhorse zoom with water-repellent fluorine coatings	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	120	77	88.8	199	1480
EF 70-200mm f/4L IS II USM	£1300		Upgraded premium telephoto zoom promises five stops of image stabilisation	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	100	72	80	176	780
EF 70-300mm f/4.5-5.6 IS II USM	£499	4.5★	Mid-range telephoto zoom offers really good optics and fast, silent autofocus	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	120	67	80	145.5	710
EF 75-300mm f/4-5.6 III	£300		Essentially the same lens as the 75-300mm f/4-5.6 III USM but with no USM	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	150	58	71	122	480
EF 85mm f/1.4L IS USM	£1570	5★	Sublime, highly desirable portrait lens combines large aperture and optical image stabilisation	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	85	77	88.6	105.4	950
EF 85mm f/1.8 USM	£470	5★	Non-rotating front ring thanks to rear-focusing system, as well as USM	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	85	58	75	71.5	425
EF 100mm f/2.8 L Macro IS USM	£1060	5★	Stunning MTF figures from this pro-grade macro optic	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	30	67	77.7	123	625
EF 100-400mm f/4.5-5.6 L IS II USM	£1999	4.5★	L-series construction and optics, including fluorite and Super UD elements	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	98	77	94	193	1640
EF 135mm f/2 L USM	£1360		L-series construction with two UD elements and wide maximum aperture	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	90	72	82.5	112	750
MP-E 65mm f/2.8 1-5x Macro	£1250		Macro lens designed to achieve a magnification greater than 1x without accessories	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	24	58	81	98	710
TS-E 17mm f/4 L	£2920		Ultra-wideangle tilt-and-shift optic with independent rotation of the tilt and shift movements	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	25	77	88.9	106.9	820
TS-E 24mm f/3.5 L II	£2550		Tilt-and-shift optic with independent tilt-and-shift rotation and redesigned coatings	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	21	82	88.5	106.9	780
TS-E 50mm f/2.8L Macro	£2500		Tilt-and-shift macro lens for specialist product photography, with 1:2 magnification	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	27	77	86.9	114.9	945
TS-E 90mm f/2.8L Macro	£2500		Tilt-and-shift macro lens for specialist product photography, with 1:2 magnification	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	39	77	86.9	116.5	915
TS-E 135mm f/4L Macro	£2500		Tilt-and-shift macro lens for specialist product photography, with 1:2 magnification	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	49	82	88.5	139.1	1110

ALL PRICES ARE RRP. STREET PRICES MAY VARY.

We've tried our hardest to ensure that the information in this guide is as complete and accurate as possible. However, some errors will inevitably have crept in along the way: if you spot one, please let us know by emailing ap.ed@kelsey.co.uk. Unfortunately we don't have space to list every single product on the market, so we don't include the most expensive speciality items. **Before making a purchase we advise you to check prices, along with any crucial specifications or requirements, with either a reputable retailer or the manufacturer's website.**

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DSLR Lenses

LENS	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY	MOUNT	IMAGE STABILISATION	SONY ALPHA	CANON	FOUR RIBBONS	Nikon	PENTAX	SIGMA	FULL FRAME	MIN FOCUS (CM)	FILTER THREAD (MM)	DIAMETER (MM)	LENGTH (MM)	WEIGHT (G)
LAOWA DSLR																	
12mm f/2.8 Zero D	£899		Ultra-wideangle lens for full-frame DSLRs that exhibits minimal distortion	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	18	77	74.8	82.8	609
14mm f/4 Zero-D DSLR	£499		Relatively compact and lightweight ultra-wideangle manual focus prime that promises low distortion	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	15	67	72.5	75	320
15mm f/4 1:1 Macro	£449	4★	Unusual wideangle lens that offers 1:1 Macro together with vertical shift movements on APS-C cameras	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	12	77	83.8	64.7	410
15mm f/4.5 Zero-D Shift	£1249	4★	The world's widest-angle shift lens offers +/-11mm movement in any direction	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	20	n/a	79	103	597
20mm f/4 Zero-D Shift	£1139		Wideangle shift lens that offers +/-11mm movement and promises zero distortion	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	25	82	91	95	747
24mm f/14 2x Macro Probe	£1599		Unique specialist macro lens with submersible front barrel and built-in LED lights	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	47	n/a	38	408	474
24mm f/14 2x Peri Probe	£2449		Development of macro probe design with swappable straight and 90° perisopic front sections	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	n/a	61.3	408	770	
25mm f/2.8 Ultra Macro 2.5x - 5x	£399		Unusual lens designed solely for ultra-close-up shooting, with magnification from 2.5x to 5x	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	17.3	n/a	65	82	400
60mm f/2.8 2X Ultra Macro	£319	3.5★	With 2:1 Macro, an all-in-one option for normal portrait photography as well as ultra-macro	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	18.5	62	95	70	503
100mm f/2.8 2:1 Ultra Macro APO	£469		Full-frame macro lens with twice-life-size magnification and apochromatic design	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	24.7	67	125	72	638
105mm f/2 (T3.2) STF	£649	4★	Designed for full-frame DSLRS, and features an apodisation element that renders lovely bokeh	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	90	67	98.9	76	745
NIKON DSLR																	
10-20mm f/4.5-5.6 G VR AF-P DX	£330	3.5★	Inexpensive wide zoom for DX DSLRs has effective image stabilisation but rather average optics	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	22	72	77	73	230
10-24mm f/3.5-4.5 G ED AF-S DX	£834	4★	MTF performance is good from wide open to f/11, only breaking down past f/22	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	24	77	82.5	87	460
18-140mm f/3.5-5.6 G ED VR AF-S DX	£579		A compact and lightweight DX-format zoom, this lens is a great all-rounder	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	45	67	78	97	490
18-300mm f/3.5-6.3 G ED VR	£849		New DX-format 16.7x zoom with super-telephoto reach – a compact walk-around lens	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	48	67	78.5	99	550
35mm f/1.8 G AF-S DX	£208	5★	Designed for DX-format DSLRs, a great standard prime lens	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	30	52	70	52.5	200
40mm f/2.8 G AF-S DX Micro	£250	5★	A budget-priced macro lens that delivers the goods on multiple fronts	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	20	52	68.5	64.5	235
85mm f/3.5 G ED AF-S DX VR	£522		DX-format Micro lens with a 1:1 reproduction ratio, VR II system and ED glass	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	28	52	73	98.5	355
8-15mm f/3.5-4.5 E ED Fisheye AF-S	£1299		Fisheye zoom for full-frame DSLRs that gives a circular view at 8mm and full-frame coverage at 15mm	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	16	n/a	77.5	83	485
14-24mm f/2.8 G ED AF-S	£1670	5★	A remarkable piece of kit, producing sharp images with little chromatic aberration	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	28	n/a	98	131.5	970
16-35mm f/4 G ED AF-S VR	£1072	5★	A fantastic lens that deserves to be taken seriously, with very little CA throughout	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	28	77	82.5	125	685
20mm f/1.8 G ED AF-S	£679		A fast FX-format prime lens that's compact and lightweight	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	20	77	82.5	80.5	335
24mm f/1.4 G ED AF-S	£1990	5★	Nothing short of stunning. Aside from its high price, there is very little to dislike about this optic	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	25	77	83	88.5	620
24mm f/1.8 G ED AF-S	£629		Fast FX-format lens that aims to appeal to landscape, interior, architecture and street photographers	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	23	72	77.5	83	355
24-70mm f/2.8 E ED VR	£1849	5★	Nikon's latest pro-spec standard zoom looks like its best lens yet	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	38	82	88	154.5	1070
24-85mm f/3.5-4.5 G ED VR	£520	5★	FX-format standard zoom with Auto Tripod detection and VR	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	38	72	78	82	465
24-120mm f/4 G ED AF-S VR	£1072	5★	Constant maximum aperture of f/4 and the addition of VR makes this a superb lens	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	45	77	84	103	710
28mm f/1.4 E ED AF-S	£2080		Boasts a dust- and drip-resistant build for reliable shooting in challenging weather conditions	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	28	77	83	100.5	645
28mm f/1.8 G ED AF-S	£619	5★	If you crave a wide aperture and prefer a single focal length then this Nikon prime delivers	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	25	67	73	80	330
35mm f/1.4 G ED AF-S	£1735	5★	A Nano Crystal-coated lens designed for the FX range	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	30	67	83	89.5	600
35mm f/1.8 G ED AF-S	£479		Fast FX-format prime lens with bright f/1.8 aperture. Versatile and lightweight	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	25	58	72	71.5	305
50mm f/1.4 G AF-S	£376	5★	Internal focusing and superior AF drive makes this a good alternative to the D-series 50mm f/1.4	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	45	58	73.5	54	280
50mm f/1.8 D AF	£135		Compact, lightweight, affordable prime, will stop down to f/22	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	45	52	63	39	160
50mm f/1.8 G AF-S	£200	5★	A cut-price standard lens for FX shooters or a short telephoto on DX-format DSLRs	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	45	58	72	52.5	185
58mm f/1.4 G AF-S	£1599	4★	FX-format full-frame premium prime lens with large f/1.4 aperture	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	58	72	85	70	385
70-200mm f/2.8 E FL ED VR AF-S	£2650		Latest update to Nikon's pro workhorse fast telephoto zoom brings electronic aperture control	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	110	77	88.5	202.5	1430
70-300mm f/4.5-5.6 E ED VR AF-P	£750		Nikon's first full-frame lens to feature a stepper motor for autofocus	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1200	67	80.5	146	680
80-400mm f/4.5-5.6 G ED VR AF-S	£1899	5★	Successor to the 80-400mm f/4.5-5.6 ED VR, focusing is excellent at tracking fast-moving subjects	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	175	77	95.5	203	1570
85mm f/1.4 G AF-S	£1532	5★	Fast mid tele lens with an internal focusing system and rounded diaphragm	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	85	77	86.5	84	595
85mm f/1.8 G AF-S	£470	5★	Rear-focusing system and distance window in this medium telephoto lens	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	80	67	80	73	350
105mm f/1.4 E ED AF-S	£2049		A 105mm FX-format prime lens with bright f/1.4 aperture, ideal for portraiture	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	100	82	94.5	106	985
200-500mm f/5.6 E ED VR AF-S	£1179		A super-telephoto zoom compatible with Nikon FX-format DSLR cameras	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	220	95	108	267.5	2300
300mm f/4 E PF ED VR AF-S	£1230	5★	Light, compact AF-S full-frame telephoto lens with ED glass elements	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	140	77	89	147.5	755
19mm f/4 E ED PC	£3300		Super-wideangle tilt-and-shift lens for architecture and landscape photography	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	25	n/a	89	124	885
24mm f/3.5 D ED PC-E	£1774		Perspective Control lens with Nano Crystal Coating and electronic control over aperture	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	21	77	82.5	108	730
45mm f/2.8 D ED PC-E Micro	£1393		Perspective Control (PC-E) standard lens used in specialised fields such as studio and architecture	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	25	77	82.5	112	740
85mm f/2.8D PC-E Micro	£1299		Perspective Control (PC-E) telephoto, designed to be ideal for portraits and product photography	39	77	83.5	107	635

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DSLR Lenses

LENS	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY	MOUNT	IMAGE STABILISATION	SONY ALPHA	CANON	FOUR THIRDS	Nikon	PENTAX	SIGMA	FULL FRAME	MIN FOCS (CM)	FILTER THREAD (MM)	DIAETER (MM)	LENGTH (MM)	WEIGHT (G)
PENTAX DSLR																	
DA 10-17mm f/3.5-4.5 HD Fisheye ED	£499		Updated fisheye zoom lens gains refreshed cosmetic design, new optical coatings and removable hood										14	n/a	70	67.5	317
DA* 11-18mm F2.8 ED DC AW HD	£1399		Premium fast ultra-wideangle zoom, includes all-weather construction and innovative focus clamp										30	82	90	100	704
DA 15mm f/4 smc ED AL Limited	£820		Limited-edition lens with hybrid aspherical and extra-low-dispersion elements										18	49	39.5	63	212
FA 15-30mm f/2.8 ED SM WR HD	£1500		Weather-resistant ultra-wideangle zoom with fast maximum aperture and fixed petal-type hood										28	n/a	98.5	143.5	1040
DA* 16-50mm f/2.8 smc ED AL IF SDM	£950	3.5★	A nice balance and robust feel, but poor sharpness at f/2.8 (which significantly improves from f/4 onwards)										30	77	84	98.5	600
DA* 16-50mm f/2.8 ED PLM AW HD	£1500		All-new premium large-aperture standard zoom with updated optics and electromagnetic aperture control										30	77	84	117	712
DA 16-85mm f/3.5-5.6 ED DC WR	£600		Weather-resistant, this zoom features a round-shaped diaphragm to produce beautiful bokeh										35	72	78	94	488
DA 18-50mm f/4-5.6 DC WR RE	£230		Super-thin standard zoom that's weather-resistant and features a round-shaped diaphragm										30	58	71	41	158
DA 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6 smc AL WR	£229		A weather-resistant construction and an aspherical element, as well as SP coating										25	52	68.5	67.5	230
DA 18-135mm f/3.5-5.6 DA ED DC WR	£600	3.5★	A weather-resistant mid-range zoom lens										40	62	73	76	405
DA 18-270mm f/3.5-6.3 smc ED SDM	£699		15x superzoom for company's K-mount DSLRs featuring two extra-low-dispersion (ED) elements										49	62	76	89	453
DA 20-40mm f/2.8-4 ED Limited DC WR	£829		With state-of-the-art HD coating, a completely round-shaped diaphragm, and weather resistant										28	55	68.5	71	283
HD-FA 21mm f/2.4 ED Limited DC WR	£1499		Ultra-wide addition to the premium Limited line-up, with aluminium barrel and electromagnetic aperture motor										18	67	74	89	416
DA 21mm f/3.2 smc AL Limited	£600		This limited-edition optic offers a floating element for extra-close focusing										20	49	63	25	140
FA 24-70mm f/2.8 ED SDM WR	£1149		Full-frame-compatible premium standard zoom - includes a HD coating to minimise flare and ghosting										38	82	109.5	88.5	787
FA 28-105mm f/3.5-5.6 ED DC HD	£549		Standard zoom lens for the K-1 full-frame DSLR that's much more affordable than the 24-70mm f/2.8										50	62	73	86.5	440
HD-FA 31mm f/1.8 Limited	£1100		Premium aluminium-bodied wideangle prime boasts an aperture ring plus HD and fluorine coatings										30	58	69	65	341
FA 35mm f/2 HD	£399		Latest version of venerable Pentax fast prime features a multi-layer HD coating										30	49	64	44.5	193
DA 35mm f/2.4 smc DA AL	£180	5★	A budget-priced prime lens for beginners										30	49	63	45	124
DA 35mm f/2.8 smc Macro	£640	4.5★	Despite slight edge softness, this lens performs excellently and is a pleasure to use										14	49	46.5	63	215
DA 40mm f/2.8 smc Limited	£450		Pancake lens with SMC coating and Quick Shift focusing system										40	49	63	15	90
HD-FA 43mm f/1.9 Limited	£650		Classic full-frame fast prime with perfect focal length for everyday use										45	49	64	27	155
FA* 50mm f/1.4 SDA AW HD	£1200		Premium fast prime with dustproof, weather-resistant design and electromagnetic aperture										40	72	80	106	910
HD-FA 50mm f/1.4	£399		Updated large-aperture prime with HD coatings and refreshed cosmetic design										45	49	65	40.5	223
FA 50mm f/1.4 smc Classic	£449		Compact fast prime with film-era optics, aperture ring, and coatings designed to give 'rainbow flare'										45	49	65	37	216
DA 50mm f/1.8 smc DA	£249	4★	Affordable short telephoto lens ideal for portraits										45	52	38.5	63	122
D-FA 50mm f/2.8 smc Macro	£550		Macro lens capable of 1:1 reproduction and with a Quick Shift focus mechanism										19	49	60	67.5	265
DA* 50-135mm f/2.8 smc ED IF SDM	£1200	4★	Constant f/2.8 aperture; well suited to portraiture and mid-range action subjects										100	67	76.5	136	765
DA 50-200mm f/4-5.6 smc ED WR	£210		Weather-resistant construction, Quick Shift focus system and an SP coating										n/a	49	69	79.5	285
DA* 55mm f/1.4 smc SDM	£800	4.5★	Despite questions about the particular sample tested, this lens scores highly										45	58	70.5	66	375
DA 55-300mm f/4.5-6.3 ED PLM WR RE	£400		Compact weather resistant telephoto zoom has video-friendly fast and silent autofocus motor										95	58	76.5	89	442
DA 60-250mm f/4 smc ED IF SDM	£1450	4.5★	With a constant f/4 aperture and an ultrasonic motor for speedy focusing										110	67	167.5	82	1040
DA 70mm f/2.4 smc AL Limited	£600		Medium telephoto lens with an aluminium construction and a Super Protect coating										70	49	63	26	130
D-FA* 70-200mm f/2.8 ED DC AW	£1850		Fast telephoto zoom in Pentax's high-performance Star (*) series developed for best image rendition										120	77	91.5	203	1755
D-FA 70-210mm F4 ED SDM WR	£1199		Compact telephoto zoom with constant f/4 maximum aperture and weather-resistant construction										95	67	78.5	175	819
HD-FA 77mm f/1.8 Limited	£800		Renewed version of short telephoto portrait prime that features a traditional aperture ring										70	49	48	64	270
D-FA* 85mm f/1.4 SDM AW	£1999		Upcoming large-aperture short telephoto prime promises premium optics and weather-sealing										85	82	95	123.5	1255
D-FA 100mm f/2.8 Macro WR	£680	5★	Street price makes this something of a bargain for a true macro offering full-frame coverage										30	49	65	80.5	340
HD-FA 100mm f/2.8 ED AW Macro	£699		Updated 1:1 macro lens boasts improved optical formula and all-weather construction										30	49	65	80.5	348
FA 150-450mm f/4.5-5.6 ED DC AW	£2000		Super-telephoto lens with weather resistance, designed to produce extra-sharp, high-contrast images										200	86	241.5	95	2000
DA* 200mm f/2.8 smc ED IF SDM	£1000	4.5★	SDM focusing system on the inside, and dirtproof and splashproof on the outside										120	77	83	134	825
DA* 300mm f/4 smc ED IF SDM	£1300		This tele optic promises ultrasonic focus and high image quality thanks to ED glass										140	77	83	184	1070
SAMYANG DSLR																	
8mm f/3.5 UMC Fisheye CS II	£274		Wideangle fisheye lens designed for digital reflex cameras with APS-C sensors										30	n/a	75	77.8	417
10mm f/3.5 XP MF	£950		World's widest-angle rectilinear lens promises 130° field of view with minimal distortion										26	n/a	95	98.1	731
10mm f/2.8 ED AS NCS CS	£429		Features a nano crystal anti-reflection coating system and embedded lens hood										24	n/a	86	77	580
12mm f/2.8 ED AS NCS Fisheye	£430		Fisheye ultra-wideangle prime lens for full-frame DSLRs										20	n/a	77.3	70.2	500
14mm f/2.4 XP MF	£899		High-end ultra-wideangle prime with premium optics and large maximum aperture										28	n/a	95	109.4	791
AF 14mm f/2.8	£649	4.5★	Samyang's first AF SLR lens features very decent image quality and weather-sealed construction										20	n/a	90.5	95.6	485
14mm f/2.8 MF Mk II	£439		Ultra-wideangle manual-focus prime with weather-sealing and de-clickable aperture ring										28	n/a	87	96.3	641
16mm f/2.0 ED AS UMC CS	£389		Fast wideangle lens for digital reflex cameras fitted with APS-C sensors										20	n/a	89.4	83	583
20mm f/1.8 ED AS UMC	£430		Large-aperture manual focus wideangle lens for full-frame DSLRs										20	77	83	113.2	520
24mm f/1.4 AS UMC	£499		Fast ultra-wideangle manual-focus lens comprising 13 elements arranged in 12 groups										25	77	95	116	680
24mm f/3.5 ED AS UMSTS	£949	3★	Tilt-and-shift wideangle lens for a fraction of the price of Canon and Nikon's offerings										20	82	86	110.5	680
35mm f/1.2 XP MF	£719		Ultra-large aperture, manual focus prime with premium optics										34	86	93	117.4	1106
35mm f/1.4 AS UMC	£369	4.5★	While manual focus only, this prime impressed us in real-world use, making it something of a bargain										30	77	83	111	660
50mm f/1.2 XP MF	£639		Large aperture manual-focus prime promises 50MP resolution										45	86	93	117.4	1200
50mm f/1.4 AS UMC	£299		Manual-focus fast standard prime for full-frame DSLRs										45	77	74.7	81.6	575
85mm f/1.2 XP MF	£899		High-end manual focus lens sports an impressively fast maximum aperture										80	86	93	98.4	1050g
AF 85mm f/1.4	£599	3★	Autofocus fast short telephoto portrait lens for use on Canon or Nikon full-frame DSLRs										90	77	88	72	485
85mm f/1.4 MF Mk II	£389		Large-aperture short telephoto manual-focus prime is weather-sealed and the aperture can be de-clicked										110	72	78	72.2	541
100mm f/2.8 ED UMC Macro	£389		Full-frame compatible, the Samyang 100mm is a true Macro lens offering 1:1 magnification										30	67	72.5	123.1	720
135mm f/2 ED UMC	£399		Manual focus portrait prime has fast aperture for subject isolation and background blur										80	77	82	122	830

DSLR Lenses

LENSES	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY	IMAGE STABILISATION	Sony Alpha	Canon	Four Ribbons	Nikon	Pentax	Sigma	Full Frame	Min Focus (cm)	Filter Thread (mm)	Diameter (mm)	Length (mm)	Weight (g)
			Mount										Dimensions			
SIGMA DSLR																
12-24mm f/4 DG HSM | A	£1649	5★	Premium full-frame wideangle zoom designed to have minimal distortion in its wideangle imagery	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	24	n/a	101	132	1150
14mm f/1.8 DG HSM | A	£1679		World's first f/1.8 ultra-wideangle prime lens for full-frame DSLRs	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	27	n/a	95.4	126	1170
14-24mm f/2.8 DG HSM | A	£1399	5★	Pro-specification fast ultra-wide prime for full-frame DSLRs includes weather-sealed construction	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	26	n/a	96.4	135.1	1150
18-35mm f/1.8 DC HSM | A	£799	5★	Said to be the world's first constant f/1.8 zoom; DoF equivalent of constant f/2.7 on full frame	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	28	72	78	121	810
20mm f/1.4 DG HSM | A	£799	5★	An outstanding wideangle fixed-focal-length lens	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	27.6	n/a	90.7	129.8	950
24mm f/1.4 DG HSM | A	£799	5★	The latest addition to Sigma's 'Art' line of high-quality fast primes	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	25	77	85	90.2	665
24-70mm f/2.8 DG OS HSM | A	£1399	5★	Latest premium fast standard zoom for full frame includes optical image stabilisation	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	37	82	88	107.6	1020
24-105mm f/4 DG OS HSM | A	£849	4.5★	Serious full-frame alternative to own-brand lenses at a lower price, with no compromises in the build	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	45	82	89	109	885
28mm f/1.4 DG HSM | A	£1099	4.5★	High-quality, weathersealed fast wideangle prime for full-frame DSLRs	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	28	77	82.8	107.1	865
35mm f/1.4 DG HSM | A	£799	5★	Superb large-aperture prime; first lens in company's 'Art' series	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	30	67	77	94	665
40mm f/1.4 DG HSM | A	£1100	5★	Large and heavy prime promising natural-looking perspective and top-quality optics	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	40	82	87.8	131	1200
50mm f/1.4 DG HSM | A	£849	5★	This lens has a unique design that pays off in truly excellent image quality	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	40	77	85.4	100	815
50-100mm f/1.8 DC HSM | A	£829	5★	This APS-C-format lens aims to cover the focal lengths of three prime lenses in one	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	37.4	82	93.5	170.7	1490
60-600mm f/4.5-6.3 DG OS HSM | S	£1899		Weathersealed 10x zoom encompasses huge range from standard to super-telephoto	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	60	105	120.4	268.9	2700
70mm f/2.8 DG Macro | A	£499		The first macro lens in Sigma's Art line-up features an extending-barrel focus-by-wire design	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	26	49	71	106	515
70-200mm f/2.8 DG OS HSM | S	£1349	5★	Superb large-aperture telephoto zoom shows high sharpness and minimal chromatic aberration	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	120	82	94.2	202.9	1805
85mm f/1.4 DG HSM | A	£1199	5★	Optically stunning fast short telephoto prime is the ultimate portrait lens for DSLR users	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	85	86	95	126	1130
100-400mm f/5-6.3 DG OS HSM | C	£799	4.5★	Relatively lightweight telezoom comes with weather-sealing and choice of push-pull or twist zoom	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	160	67	86.4	182.3	1160
105mm f/1.4 DG HSM | A	£1499	4.5★	Sigma's 'bokeh monster' super-fast portrait lens is weathersealed and comes with a tripod foot	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	100	105	115.9	131.5	1645
105mm f/2.8 EX DG OS HSM Macro	£649	4.5★	An optically stabilised macro lens, this super-sharp lens is one of our favourites	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	31.2	62	78	126.4	725
120-300mm f/2.8 DG HSM | S	£3599		First lens in company's 'Sports' series; switch enables adjustment of both focus speed and focus limiter	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	150	105	124	291	3390
135mm f/1.8 DG HSM | A	£1399	5★	Super-fast portrait prime designed to provide sufficient resolution for 50MP DSLRs	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	87.5	82	91.4	114.9	1130
150-600mm f/5-6.3 DG OS HSM | C	£1199		Budget 'Contemporary' version of Sigma's long-range telephoto zoom is smaller and lighter	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	280	95	105	260.1	1930
150-600mm f/5-6.3 DG OS HSM | S	£1599		This portable, high-performance telephoto zoom from Sigma's Sports line is dust and splashproof	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	260	105	121	290.2	2860
TAMRON DSLR																
18-400mm f/3.5-6.3 Di II VC HLD	£650	4★	The longest-ranging telephoto zoom yet made turns in a surprisingly decent performance	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	45	72	79	123.9	710
24-70mm f/2.8 SP Di VC USD G2	£1249		Upgraded fast zoom with improved image stabilisation and moisture-resistant construction	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	38	82	88.4	111	905
35mm f/1.4 SP Di USD	£930		Premium large-aperture prime with moisture-resistant construction, billed as Tamron's best-ever lens	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	30	72	80.9	104.8	815
35mm f/1.8 SP Di VC USD	£580	4.5★	Moderately wide prime combines ultrasonic focusing, image stabilisation and a fast aperture	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	20	67	80.4	80.8	480
70-200mm f/2.8 SP Di VC USD G2	£1350	5★	Excellent telephoto zoom with updated autofocus and image stabilisation plus sealed construction	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	95	77	88	193.8	1500
70-210mm f/4 Di VC USD	£699	4.5★	Lightweight telezoom promises high optical performance, image stabilisation and weather-sealing	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	95	67	76	176.5	860
100-400mm f/4.5-6.3 Di VC USD	£789	5★	Relatively compact and lightweight telephoto zoom with moisture-resistant construction	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	150	67	199	86.2	1135
150-600mm f/5-6.3 SP Di VC USD G2	£1340		Popular long telephoto zoom that produces excellent results	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	220	95	108.4	260.2	2010
VOIGTLANDER DSLR																
28mm f/2.8 Aspherical SL II-S Color-Skopar	£499		Manual-focus wideangle prime for Nikon F-mount SLRs boasts high-quality metal construction	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	15	52	66.3	32.8	205
58mm f/1.4 SL II-S Nokton	£518		Large-aperture manual focus standard prime for Nikon SLRs, including classic film cameras	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	45	52	67.6	45.5	320
90mm f/2.8 APO-Skopar SL II-S	£529		Remarkably small and lightweight manual-focus short telephoto portrait prime	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	90	52	66.3	41	260
ZEISS DSLR																
15mm f/2.8 Milvus	£2329		This super-wideangle lens has an angle of view of 110° and uses an advanced retrofocus design	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	25	95	102.3	100.2	947
18mm f/2.8 Milvus	£1999		Compact super-wideangle lens with premium optics including a floating focus system for close-ups	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	25	77	90	93	721
21mm f/2.8 Milvus	£1299		Premium wideangle lens with complex optics designed to be free of distortion	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	22	82	95.5	95	851
25mm f/1.4 Milvus	£1999	5★	Optically excellent, large-aperture manual focus wideangle lens with weather-sealed construction	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	25	82	95.2	123	1225
35mm f/1.4 Milvus	£1699		Large aperture, premium-quality manual-focus prime with weather-sealed construction	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	30	72	84.8	124.8	1174
35mm f/2 Milvus	£829		Compact, moderate wideangle manual focus prime	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	30	58	77	83	702
50mm f/1.4 Planar T*	£559		Classic double-Gauss design manual focus standard prime for full-frame SLRs	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	45	58	71	71	380
50mm f/1.4 Milvus	£949	5★	An exceptionally good lens offering sharpness, detail, clean edges and a great user experience	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	45	67	82.5	94	922
50mm f/2 Milvus Macro	£949		Manual-focus macro lens with half-life-size magnification and stunning optics	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	24	67	81	75.3	730
85mm f/1.4 Planar T*	£989		Classic portrait prime designed to give smooth, rounded bokeh effects	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	100	72	78	88	670
85mm f/1.4 Milvus	£1379	5★	Fast 85mm manual-focus prime lens that's perfect for portraiture	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	80	77	90	113	1280
100mm f/2 Milvus Macro	£1299		A manual-focus macro lens with absolutely superb optics and half-life-size reproduction	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	88	67	80.5	104	843
135mm f/2 Milvus	£1899		Telephoto lens with a large aperture and smooth bokeh, ideal for medium-distance portrait photography	80	77	129	132	1123	

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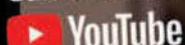


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Final Analysis

John Wade considers...

Orson Welles as Harry Lime, publicity still, 1949

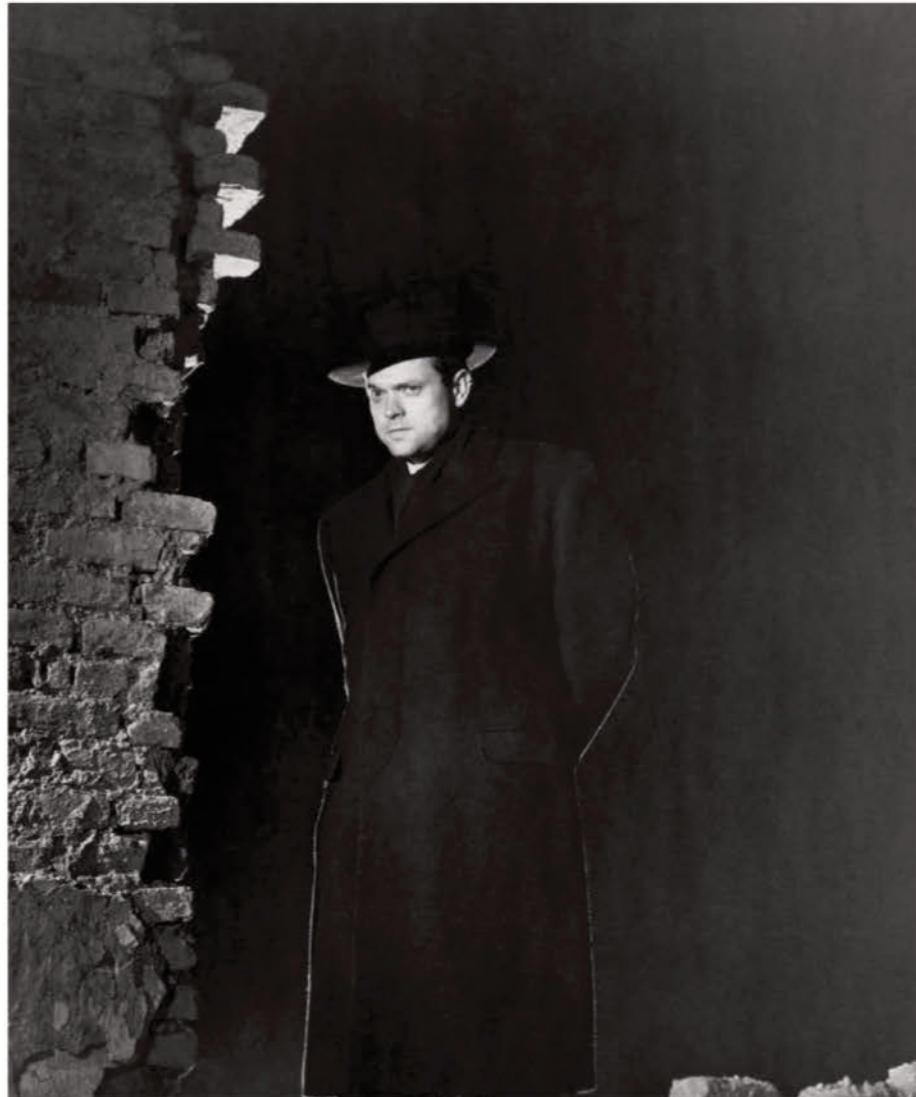
Apologies if this week's *Final Analysis* reads more like a film critique than the usual scrutiny of a single picture. But if you are looking for a masterclass on how to use monochrome to its best, here's my advice: watch the 1949 film *The Third Man*.

In 104 minutes of director Carol Reed's exquisite film-making, and Australian cinematographer Robert Krasker's stunning black & white photography, you'll find pointers on how to manipulate monochrome, ways to create impact with unusual camera angles, reminders of the power of picture composition, methods of exploiting light and shadows in night photography, even how to improve your portraits.

There's no room here to tell the whole story, so understand that Harry Lime is presumed dead. Spoiler alert: he isn't, though it's two-thirds through the film before he makes his first appearance. It's night in a dark street full of shadows and obliquely lit cobbles. In a jet-black doorway, a cat is fussing around a pair of shoes. Across the street, someone throws open a window and puts on a light that illuminates just a face in the doorway that seems to hover like the Cheshire Cat's grin in the darkness. The lighting is superb, upstaged only by Harry's expression, which suggests friendliness with a touch of threat, aloofness, arrogance, smugness and a playful, yet chilling, smile. It's the kind of expression a portrait photographer might spend a lifetime trying to coax from a sitter. But maybe only Orson Welles, who plays Harry, could ever provide it.

This picture isn't of that pivotal moment. It's a publicity still from the film. The story is set in Vienna immediately after World War II when the city was in ruins. Beneath a charming exterior Harry is a much darker character. The picture says it all: a suggestion of the ruins without a need to show more; and Harry, his face well lit, the rest in deep shadow, his dark clothing revealed only by a thin rim of light. It gets across a complicated message in very simple terms.

Much of the film is shot at night in the



streets of Vienna, often at what cinematographers call a Dutch Angle. That means twisting the camera so that vertical lines lean and horizontal lines tilt. Freeze any of these shots and look at the way the tilted angles of the camera plus the light and shadows define so much of the composition. You can translate that into ways of adding drama and atmosphere to the right kind of still photography picture, especially one shot in mono at night.

And then there's the climax, a manhunt through the sewers of Vienna, full of directional light and exaggerated shadows. Don't get me started on those scenes because I've run out of space. Just watch the film.

Some years ago, someone thought it a good idea to colorise *The Third Man*. I have seven words of advice for anyone thinking of watching the film in colour: no, no, no, no, no, no, no.

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