

Managing Digital Photos

Tips and Tricks

1. To maintain image quality, convert pictures you've shot in JPEG to TIFF. You can then work and re-work them in an imaging program without having them degrade. And if you screw up, the original JPEG is always there to make another TIFF from.
2. Digital zoom is a worthless feature; all it does is enlarge a section of the image with a resulting loss in resolution. You can do that in any imaging program with better results.
3. Memory cards are not always reliable, so do not trust all your pictures to one humongous card. Depending on the resolution and compression ratio you shoot at, use cards that hold about 50 images so all won't be lost if the card stops working.
4. If a memory card goes bad, don't do anything. There are many recovery programs that will save your images and the less you do the better your chances are that you can retrieve them unharmed.
5. All digicam optical viewfinders show you less of the field of view than will be recorded. If you want to frame your images accurately, run a few tests to see how much more will actually be included and compensate for it, usually by moving in.
6. Much ado is currently being made about shooting in RAW mode, which eliminates in-camera adjustments for color and sharpness, among others, and let's you work with them yourself afterwards in an imaging program. But shooting in RAW inflates file sizes, slows down certain camera functions, and requires more work. If your exposures and white balance are correct (and they usually are) use JPEG. The quality will be virtually the same without all the hassles.
7. Bracketing is a great feature to use when you're shooting under difficult conditions (extremely low or bright light). The camera will shoot one picture at what it thinks is the correct exposure and then two more, one overexposed and the other underexposed. Among the three, one should be right on the nose.
8. Photography is about making pictures that say something. The finest equipment is worthless if you can't use it to express yourself. It is useful to read a few books that emphasize the creative side.