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1. Introduction

Nikon D100 Review

July 2002 | By Phil Askey

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Preview based on a production Nikon D100, Firmware v1.00

The D100 enters that new segment of the digital camera market which was created when Canon released the EOS-D30. It's the middle ground between the high end \$1,000 prosumer digital cameras and professional D-SLR's. This years PMA saw the announcement of no less than four new D-SLR's all aimed at that \$2,000-\$3,000 segment. It's still pretty amazing to think that you can now pick up a six megapixel D-SLR for around \$2,000.

Since this article was first published as a preview Canon, Fujifilm and Nikon have announced their pricing. The Canon EOS-D60 full kit weighs in at \$2,199, the Fujifilm S2 Pro at \$2,399 and the Nikon D100 at \$1,999.

The D100 has a six megapixel sensor, a body loosely based on the F80 (although Nikon are keen to note that it shares only some of its components with that camera), a Nikon F mount and a set of features which make it an extremely attractive and capable proposition.

Nikon D100 Major Features

This list, supplied by Nikon Europe

- 6.1 effective megapixels rendering 3,008 x 2,000-pixel images
- Compact and lightweight (weighs approx. 700g/24.7 oz.)
- Low-noise CCD sensor
- 3D Digital Matrix Image Control for precise exposure control, adaptive auto white balance and optimal color accuracy
- High-performance built-in Speedlight with D-TTL flash control
- Three color modes offered for different workflow environments
- Five-Area Autofocus with Dynamic AF operation
- High-speed image processing provided by new one-chip system LSI
- Top shutter speed of 1/4,000 sec. and flash sync speed up to 1/180 sec.
- Plug-and-play USB 1.1 interface for quick computer connection
- On-Demand Grid Lines can be displayable in viewfinder
- Custom Settings can be selectable in the LCD monitor
- Compatible with CompactFlash cards Type I and Type II including 512 MB / 1 GB IBM MicroDrive
- Nikon View 5.1 software (supplied) enables easy transfer and viewing of images on your computer also includes rudimentary RAW file manipulation and conversion
- Optional Nikon Capture 3 software for excellent image management and remote operation
- Optional Multi Function Battery Pack MB-D100 accepts six 1.5V LR6 (AA-size alkaline) batteries or one or two Li-Ion batteries for extended shooting capability. Features voice memo recording/playback function, vertical shutter release button, Command and Sub Command Dials, AF start button and a 10-pin remote terminal

Whose sensor is it anyway?

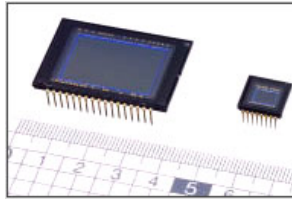
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About a week before Nikon revealed the D100, Sony announced an APS sized six megapixel sensor. Putting two and two together (and considering the specs are identical) it's been fairly easy to ascertain that Nikon is using Sony's six megapixel sensor in the D100. In the picture on the right (from Sony's press release) you can see the size of the six megapixel CCD compared to a standard consumer digital camera 1/1.8" CCD.



In that announcement Sony revealed the specifications of this particular CCD:

Optical Format	1.8" / diagonal 28.4 mm (APS sized)
Aspect Ratio	3:2
Colour filters	Primary GRGB (Bayer Mosaic)
Transfer method	Interline frame readout (requires mechanical shutter)
Total number of pixels	3110 x 2030 (6.31 million)
Number of effective pixels	3032 x 2016 (6.11 million)
Active pixels	3000 x 2000 (6 million square pixels)
Active imager area	23.4 x 15.6 mm
Unit cell size	7.8µm x 7.8µm
Optical black	Horizontal: Front 20 pixels, Rear 50 pixels Vertical: Front 4 pixels, Rear 2 pixels
Saturation signal	900 mV
Smear	-80 dB
Frame rate	3.06 fps (single channel mode) 5.09 fps (dual channel mode)

Review notes

This review started life as a preview article posted in February 2002 and updated again in May. The final review was prepared in July 2002 when a full production D100 became available. Note that many of the product shots are those taken of the pre-production camera, however a full production unit was used to reconfirm operation and for all performance testing and image quality samples.

If you're new to digital photography you may wish to read the Digital Photography Glossary before diving into this article (it may help you understand some of the terms used).

Conclusion / Recommendation / Ratings are based on the opinion of the author.

Images which can be viewed at a larger size have a small magnifying glass icon in the bottom right corner of the image, clicking on the image will display a larger (normally 960 x 720 or smaller if cropped) image in a new window.

To navigate the review simply use the next / previous page buttons, to jump to a particular section either pick the section from the drop down or select it from the navigation bar at the top.

DPreview calibrate their monitors using Color Vision OptiCal at the (fairly well accepted) PC normal gamma 2.2, this means that on our monitors we can make out the difference between all of the (computer generated) grayscale blocks below. We recommend to make the most of this review you should be able to see the difference (at least) between X,Y and Z and ideally A,B and C.



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1. Introduction

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Nikon D100 6MP Digital SLR Camera	\$125.00
Nikon D100 - Digital camera - SLR - 6.1 Mpix - body only - supported memory: CF	\$189.00
Nikon D100 6MP Digital SLR Camera	\$125.00
Nikon D3200 24.2 MP CMOS Digital SLR with 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6 AF-S DX VR NIKKOR Zoom Lens (Black)	Too low to display
Nikon D5100 16.2MP CMOS Digital SLR Camera with 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6 AF-S DX VR NIKKOR Zoom Lens	\$646.95

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