

Digital SLR Camera Timeline

This timeline will introduce you to all of the different digital SLR cameras released since 2005.

For each camera, I've indicated approximately when it was released (by month) and how many megapixels the camera has. I've also noted which "extra features" the camera includes.

As of 2009, there are 5 extra features that can be included in any digital SLR:

- **Dust Control** - dust control sensors repel dust that can stick to the sensor when you change lenses
- **Built-in Image Stabilization** - the camera shifts the sensor back and forth to compensate for camera shake
- **Live View** - you can preview the image you're about to take on the camera's LCD screen (just like a compact)
- **Dynamic Range** - control over dynamic range helps preserve image detail in scenes with a lot of contrast
- **Video** - the camera captures video clips in addition to still images

You can use this timeline to clearly see how the digital SLR has evolved, and which major new features have been introduced.

- Cameras that represent important milestones in the history of digital SLR development are colored yellow.
- A summary presents camera highlights for each year, and identifies important trends and technological advancements.
- Click any camera name link to read an in-depth guide.

You can also use this timeline to see what older models preceded the ones currently on the shelves.

If you are just making the transition from point-and-shoot compact to digital SLR and don't want to spend over \$500 on a camera, one great option is to buy an older used camera.

Many photographers with deep pockets like to upgrade their SLRs when new cameras are released with "breakthrough" features. This means that there are plenty of used cameras to be found on sites like [craigslist](#) and [eBay](#).

If you're willing to live without some of the "latest and greatest" features, you can get your feet wet with a digital SLR without having to use up your life's savings.

2005

SUMMARY

- The megapixel plateau in 2005 was 6 - more than enough to make great 8x10 prints. Toward the end of the year, Olympus and Nikon broke this trend.
- Konica Minolta pioneered built-in image stabilization, and included it with their second camera, the Maxxum 5D.
- The Olympus E-500 was the only camera with a dust control system.
- The Canon 5D was one of the first [full-frame digital SLR](#) cameras available for the consumer market.
- Nikon had a HUGE release with their D200. The camera had advanced autofocus and incredible speed, which helped make it one of the [top rated digital SLR cameras](#) for years.

CAMERAS

| Camera | Released | MP | Dust Control | Built-in IS | Live View | Dynamic Range | Video | Speed (FPS) | Notes |
|---------------------------------------|----------|------|--------------|-------------|-----------|---------------|-------|-------------|--|
| Canon Rebel XT (350D) | March | 8 | | | | | | 3.0 | Second Canon digital Rebel |
| Nikon D70s | May | 6 | | | | | | 3.0 | |
| Nikon D50 | June | 6 | | | | | | 3.0 | |
| Minolta Maxxum 5D | July | 6 | | X | | | | 3.0 | Second SLR to include built-in stabilization |
| Pentax *ist DL | Aug | 6 | | | | | | 2.8 | |
| Olympus E-500 | Sept | 8 | X | | | | | 3.0 | |
| Canon 5D | Oct | 12.8 | | | | | | 3.0 | Full-frame |
| Nikon D200 | Dec | 10 | | | | | | 5.0 | Top rated for years |

2006

SUMMARY

- In January of 2006, Konica Minolta closed the doors on its digital camera business and sold their entire operation to Sony. This was good news for Sony, who had no presence in the digital SLR market until that time. In April, Sony announced their new line of digital SLR cameras called "Alpha". The DSLR-A100 was the first camera released.
- Panasonic released its first digital SLR, which came out of a partnership between Panasonic and Olympus.
- The [Olympus E-330](#) was the first digital SLR camera to include a [live view LCD](#).
- The transition from 6 to 10 megapixels becomes more obvious.
- "Extra" features like dust control, built-in stabilization and live view have not yet taken hold.

CAMERAS

| Camera | Released | MP | Dust Control | Built-in IS | Live View | Dynamic Range | Video | Speed (FPS) | Notes |
|--|----------|-----|--------------|-------------|-----------|---------------|-------|-------------|---|
| Olympus E-330 | Jan | 7.5 | X | | X | | | 3.0 | First DSLR with a live view LCD |
| Canon 30D | Feb | 8 | | | | | | 5.0 | |
| Samsung GX-1S | April | 6 | | | | | | 2.8 | |
| Samsung GX-1L | April | 6 | | | | | | 2.8 | |
| Sony A100 | July | 10 | X | X | | | | 3.0 | Sony's first digital SLR after taking over Konica Minolta |
| Pentax K100D | July | 6 | | | | | | 2.8 | |
| Nikon D80 | Aug | 10 | | | | | | 3.0 | |
| Pentax K110D | Aug | 6 | | | | | | 2.8 | |
| Panasonic DMC-L1 | Sept | 7.5 | | | | | | 3.0 | Panasonic's first digital SLR (after partnering with Olympus) |
| Canon Rebel xTi (400D) | Oct | 10 | | | | | | 3.0 | |
| Pentax K10D | Dec | 10 | | | | | | 3.0 | |
| Nikon D40 | Dec | 10 | | | | | | 2.5 | |

2007

SUMMARY

- [Dust control](#) is available on many more cameras, [built-in image stabilization](#) is included in cameras made by Samsung and Pentax and Olympus expands its live view.
- Olympus releases the first camera with dust control, built-in image stabilization and a live view LCD (the [E-510](#)).
- Sony releases their first camera for the more advanced photographer market (the A700).
- The Nikon D300 is a huge upgrade over the older D200, and quickly rises to the top thanks to rave reviews.

CAMERAS

| Camera | Released | MP | Dust Control | Built-in IS | Live View | Dynamic Range | Video | Speed (FPS) | Notes |
|-------------------------------|----------|----|--------------|-------------|-----------|---------------|-------|-------------|---|
| Samsung GX-10 | Jan | 10 | X | X | | | | 3.0 | |
| Nikon D40x | April | 10 | | | | | | 3.0 | |
| Olympus E-410 | June | 10 | X | | X | | | 3.0 | |
| Olympus E-510 | July | 10 | X | X | X | | | 3.0 | First DSLR with dust control, built-in IS and live view |
| Pentax K100D Super | Aug | 10 | X | X | | | | 2.8 | |
| Canon 40D | Sept | 10 | X | | X | | | 6.5 | |
| Sony A700 | Nov | 12 | X | X | | | | 5.0 | Sony's first "prosumer" camera |
| Nikon D300 | Nov | 12 | X | | X | X | | 6.0 | |
| Olympus E-3 | Nov | 10 | X | X | X | | | 5.0 | Ultra-fast autofocus when paired with an SWD lens |
| Panasonic DMC-L10 | Dec | 10 | | | X | | | 3.0 | |

2008

SUMMARY

- Dust control and live view LCDs are now quite common, along with image stabilization - although with Canon and Nikon the stabilization is built into the *lenses*, not the camera bodies.
- The new "it" feature is Dynamic Range Control
- 10 megapixels is the norm, but this is quickly exceeded by cameras with 12 megapixels or more.
- The Nikon D90 is the first digital SLR to capture both video and still images (followed by the Canon 5D Mark II).
- Every camera keeps high ISO noise to a minimum, providing the ability to capture images in low light without a flash.

CAMERAS

| Camera | Released | MP | Dust Control | Built-in IS | Live View | Dynamic Range | Video | Speed (FPS) | Notes |
|--|----------|------|--------------|-------------|-----------|---------------|-------|-------------|---|
| Sony A200 | Feb | 10 | X | X | | | | 3.0 | |
| Pentax K20D | March | 14 | X | X | X | | | 3.0 | Highest MP count at time of release |
| Nikon D60 | March | 10 | X | | | | | 3.0 | |
| Pentax K200D | April | 10 | X | X | | | | 2.8 | Cheapest SLR with built-in IS and weatherproofing |
| Canon Rebel XSi (450D) | April | 12 | X | | X | X | | 3.5 | |
| Sony A350 | April | 14 | X | X | X | | | 2.5 | |
| Olympus E-420 | May | 10 | X | | X | | | 3.5 | |
| Sony A300 | May | 10 | X | X | X | | | 3.0 | |
| Nikon D700 | July | 12.1 | X | | X | X | | | Huge ISO range (from 100 to 25600) |
| Olympus E-520 | Aug | 10 | X | X | X | X | | 3.5 | |
| Canon Rebel XS (1000D) | Aug | 10 | X | | X | X | | 3.0 | |
| Nikon D90 | Sept | 12 | X | | X | X | X | 4.5 | First DSLR to capture video (HD 720p) |
| Canon 50D | Oct | 15 | X | | X | X | | 6.0 | |
| Sony A900 | Oct | 24.6 | X | X | X | X | | 5.0 | Highest megapixel count |
| Canon 5D Mk II | Nov | 21 | X | | X | X | X | 3.9 | Second DSLR to capture video (HD 1080p) |