

So You Have a New Digital Camera
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If you were lucky enough to get a new camera for Christmas, congratulations! However, along with this jewel, I'm sure you also got a complicated user's manual. I hate 'em! But cheer up; all the mystery will soon go out of that book.

When I bought my first digital camera, I felt lost. I had never worked from menus before, and they seemed so overly complicated. However, after a couple of dozen shots of my refrigerator, washing machine, and the cats, I began to feel comfortable with my new toy. And now, it seems intuitive; I can make changes in the settings without mental effort. In fact, I don't know how I ever got along without the wonderful features this camera has! So the point is: play with it; check out all of the menu options in the privacy of your home so you won't have technical problems later. Following directions in the manual, you're not going to hurt it!

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Between photo sessions, it's best not to leave your rechargeable batteries on the charger. Many chargers provide a trickle that's excessive over a period of time, and this will degrade the cells.

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In what we laughingly call "the good ol' days," we had a choice of films to use in our cameras. That was wonderful! There were so many films for color pictures available, as well as the still popular black-and-white shots. And within those two groups, there were fast (ISO 400) Kodak Tri-X films for B&W news (action and nighttime) pictures, as well as slower (ISO 25) Kodachrome film for beautiful, fine-grained slides. If you were happy with black-and-white prints, there was very fine grained Panatomic-X (ISO 32) that could produce great enlargements. There was a film for everything! But what if you had the Panatomic-X in your camera, and six frames hadn't been used yet; and you wanted to shoot a night baseball game under floodlights? You could remove the unfinished film from the camera, or you could bang away at the kids in order to finish the roll. Cheez! What a waste! Plus, you had to obtain a roll of the faster film, too. But with your digital camera, you have all of those "films" in the camera at the same time -- color or B&W-- with a choice of ISO values to be selected as you need them, regardless of the number of shots you've already made. If only they had done this years ago!

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