

# Consumer Corner

## How To Buy A Digital Camera

(NAPS)—Buying a digital camera can be intimidating. There are hundreds on the market, and every day a new model comes out that's easier to use, more powerful and more exciting.

Digital cameras can be less costly, more ecologically sound, more convenient and simply more fun! You can instantly see your pictures, e-mail them, post them on a Web site or use them to make greeting cards and invitations.

If you know you want one—for yourself or to give as a gift—don't let the technology or buzzwords stop you from making a purchase.

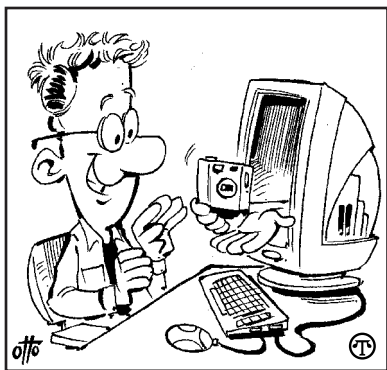
Rick Sammon, a professional photographer, host of the "Digital Photography Workshop" on the *Do it Yourself Network* and guest host of *ESPN's* "Photo Safari," offers the following buying tips:

**Price.** Decide how much you want to spend and choose the camera with the most pixels for the money. The most popular digital cameras cost \$300 to \$700.

**Pixels.** You'll need at least a three-megapixel camera to make sharp 8x10 prints. Larger prints require a four-megapixel camera. A one-megapixel camera will do for simply e-mailing photos.

**Zoom.** Optical zoom produces sharper pictures than a digital zoom, and the maximum zoom setting is important. The zoom range is indicated on the lens in millimeters with 70mm being the maximum optical zoom.

**Storage Space** is often expressed in MB (megabytes) of RAM of storage. 32MB or 48MB is the minimum amount of memory recommended.



**Transfer Method** is how your pictures get into your computer. A universal serial bus (USB) connection is faster than a serial port.

**Creative Controls.** Higher-end cameras offer more creative controls: color, white balance, exposure compensation and metering, shutter speed selection and others.

**Software** helps you crop, fix, print and e-mail pictures. Kodak's EasyShare system and iPhoto for the MAC are two examples.

**Where To Buy.** Great value and selection can be found online. Thousands of name brand digital cameras—many brand new—including Olympus, Sony, Canon, Kodak and Nikon are available at low prices on eBay ([www.ebay.com](http://www.ebay.com)). eBay is also a good source for accessories such as memory, software, a PC and color inkjet printer.

In the end, you may not be able to say exactly why you like one camera over another. It's usually a combination of a number of things, including the "cool" factor. These tips, however, will help you to make the right decision.