

Digicam Prejudices

BUY

extra storage media (memory)

- Prices drop all the time. Media cards are typically about 30% less at Costco. When you run out, slip a fresh card in.
- Have *at least* a couple of extra 256 MB or larger memory cards, so you don't run out of storage space when the birthday party, soccer game, or wildflower hike is happening.

USB media reader (about \$35 at Staples)

- waaaaay better than connecting a camera to the computer with a USB cable: going the USB route uses up batteries or means you need to buy a power adapter (often a separate, unnecessary purchase).
- you can take the media to a camera store or wherever they have a fancy printing/editing machine where you can crop, enlarge, and print on nice paper for a reasonable cost.

printing your pictures

Do it yourself, or put the pictures you've edited on a USB drive or memory stick and have them printed professionally—or upload them and have it done online.

extra battery(ies) and battery charger (if necessary)

You need to have an extra battery so that when you're shooting pix and your battery dies, the party isn't over: you just slide another battery in and keep shooting. You can recharge when you get home.

DO

Hold the camera steady—the more you zoom, the more important this becomes: hold your elbows in against your chest, lean on a wall, watch your breath, drink less coffee, use a tripod—whatever it takes.

turn off the date and time stamp: it's boring and can ruin a nice picture. (Of course, real estate appraisers and private investigators should leave this feature on.)

keep shooting (take lots of pictures): if you've brought along enough memory, you won't need to waste valuable time inspecting and deleting photos. Do that later.

THINK

which way to orient the camera—portrait or landscape?

- look at the subject: *what features do you care about?*
- for people, shoot **head & shoulders**: forget the belly, feet, etc.—no one cares.

light source

- try to get it on the person's face (not behind) (but if you're shooting flowers or trees, it's often nice to get the sun streaming through the petals or leaves)
- avoid flash (do you know how to turn it off?)

to zoom or not to zoom: know how to get your camera to zoom in. People and other wildlife are more relaxed the further away the photographer is.

composition: don't be afraid to get down

Don't always shoot straight across, standing up, eye-level. Getting down and shooting up can be especially nice with flowers and trees. Or climb up above your subject and shoot down.

edit photos on your computer—not on your camera

You'll want to attach photos to an email and send it to people without it being megapixelly humongo and taking forever to download. Size for emailing should not be more than 200 KB. Know how to

rotate, crop, brighten and compress (call it something like 4web.jpg)

Use Microsoft Office Picture Manager on Windows computers or iPhoto on Macs.

For how-to documents, see our digicam training pages at www.soesd.k12.or.us/support/training

