

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 DLSR 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 "pro-sumo" 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 DLSR 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 DLSR to capture video (HD 1080p)