

Buying a Camera for Cubelite Product Photography

Although many people will say "buy the best camera you can afford" this is not always true. You need buy the camera that best fits your needs, and this means just a few aspects and features. What are you going to do with the pictures? Print a catalogue, print brochures or flyers, use them on your web site, send e-mails of them, sell at e-bay, internal production, or stock control?

The following list provides you with the basic options you need to look for in a digital camera for product photography:

A minimum of around 4 Megapixels is all that is needed for general product photography as outlined above. The greater resolution provided by cameras with more Megapixels is only needed if you are planning to blow up your images to large format sizes.

The camera needs to have the option to be used at fully manual settings. This means that you can control the aperture and the shutter speed individually as well as some other features.

You need to be able to programme the white balance options; many cameras will come with pre-programme options or presets. As a minimum you need at least one custom white balance option. This means that the camera can "read" and self adjust itself to be able to take pictures under many light conditions. This feature is very important. White balance means that the camera will adjust itself to the ambient light you are using to give you accurate and true colours of the items being photographed.

Another important feature is the zoom option. Most of the time you'll use zoom to adjust and compose the product being photographed on the camera viewfinder or LCD monitor. Almost all new cameras have a combination of optical and digital zoom.

Optical zoom is the ability of any camera to use the supplied zoom lenses to zoom in or out into your items without using any digital electronic manipulation of the viewed image.

Digital zoom is a feature of some digital cameras to imitate an optical zoom to zoom in or out into your items. Sometimes the excessive use of the digital zooms may decrease the image quality of the item being photograph.

Buy a camera that feels strong, well made, and is easy to operate and navigate through the menus. And, it must have the ability to be attached to a tripod in order to produce sharp images. How to make a selection? Go out to a camera shop and test them. Look for cameras with the features mentioned above. Play with camera and set to full manual operational mode. Then do a custom white balance, or try to adjust the file size and resolution... Easy? Hard? Frustrating? Buy the easiest one that lets you do these things without you needing to attend night classes.

I personally use a Canon Powershot G5, which is a 5 Megapixel camera and is about 5 years old, it has now been superceded by later models.