

Digital Imaging - Consumer Buying Guide

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Camcorders

How To Choose The Camcorder That's Right For You

Digital video was once the exclusive plaything of Hollywood producers. But the price of digital technology has dropped so quickly that now almost everyone can shoot and edit digital video. Review this list of important things to understand and consider when shopping for a camcorder that best suits your lifestyle.

What You Need & Can Do

Details And Tips

1. Video Formats

What video formats are available?
What are the advantages of each?

Check out these great choices.

Format	Media	Considerations
Digital8	Tape	Can use 8mm analog tapes. Shorter record time than MiniDV.
MiniDV	Tape	Smaller tape and longer record time than Digital8. Not compatible with analog formats.
High-Definition MiniDV	Tape	Double the resolution of MiniDV and dramatically better image quality. Burning to DVD downgrades image quality somewhat.
MicroMV	Tiny Tape	Tiny cassette size for extremely compact camcorders.
MiniDVD	DVD disc	Produces ready-to-play DVDs. Not all MiniDVD formats play on all DVD players.
Removable media	Flash media	Ultra-compact size but lower image quality. Great for web video.

2. Which Format Is Right For You?

But my problem is very specific.
Can you help me here?

Here's how to get what you want.

What You Want	How to Get It
Have lots of 8mm tapes	Check out Digital8 camcorders.
Lower cost	A Digital8 – less money. Lenses are good, but not tops.
Small and great	MiniDV camcorders come in a variety of sizes, sophisticated lenses and in-camera effects.
Play back on a DVD player	DVD camcorders record on mini DVD discs that can be played back in a newer DVD player.
Playback a lot	DVD camcorder because DVD media lasts longer.
Edit on a PC	Check the type of connection required (IEEE 1394, USB 2.0 or other). In the case of DVD discs, use the DVD-RW format.

