

# HOW TO CHOOSE A DIGITAL CAMERA



## WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN A DIGITAL CAMERA FOR YEARBOOK PHOTOGRAPHY:

- A resolution of three megapixels or better (see table).
  - Lower resolution cameras are best suited for web pages or newspaper photos.
- Select camera resolution based on the maximum photo reproduction needed (see table).
  - Photos enlarged beyond this size will have a noticeable loss of resolution and may look pixelated.
- Use normal camera evaluation criteria when shopping for a digital camera.
  - For example, SLR cameras will almost always be a better choice than models with separate shutter and viewfinder.
- Only use “optical zoom” specs and settings for comparing cameras and actually taking photos.
  - The “digital zoom” feature only enlarges an area of the photo and inserts interpolated pixels to boost the resolution back to the original value.
- Make sure the camera comes with an LCD viewer.
  - Photos can be evaluated and reviewed immediately.
  - Poor photos can be deleted and retaken on the spot.
  - This can be valuable when a last-minute photo is needed to make a deadline.
- Images that are stored on Compact Flash, Secure Digital (SD) or PCMCIA (PC) cards offer more “sharing” options than those that use other media.
  - These cards are much easier to read on laptop or desktop computers.
- Get a memory card reader and at least one extra card when purchasing the camera.
  - The card reader allows the photographer to keep taking photos using the second card while photos on the first card are being downloaded into the computer.
- Get several additional cards if you want to be able to arm your photographer with multiple “rolls” of this digital film.

## PIXELS VS. INCHES

Use the highest resolution setting your camera is capable of capturing. Instead of dpi settings, digital cameras measure quality with pixel dimensions. If you divide the pixel dimensions of an image by the resolution required (300 dpi), you can determine the maximum size these images should be used in the yearbook.

Using this formula, it is easy to see why inexpensive digital cameras, or images captured in low resolution mode, will not produce great looking photos in your yearbook. The images they produce are too small at 300 dpi.

If the camera pixel dimensions are 640 x 480, it will take a photo that is roughly 2” x 1.5”.

Calculate this by dividing:

$$640/300 = 2.133 \text{ inches,}$$

$$480/300 = 1.6 \text{ inches}$$

There isn't a big demand for candid photos this size in the yearbook! Enlarge these pictures and you will be very disappointed at their quality in your yearbook.

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Use this table to calculate the largest size image that can be used from your camera.



Stay within the size limits shown in the table to get photos you will be proud of in your yearbook.

<b>Digital Camera Reference Chart</b>		
<b>Pixels Per Inch</b>	<b>Resolution (Dots per Inch)</b>	<b>Image Size In Inches</b>
<b>1 Megapixel</b>		
1260 x 960	300 dpi	4.3 x 3.2
	250 dpi	5.1 x 3.8
<b>2 Megapixels</b>		
1600 x 1200	300 dpi	5.3 x 4.0
	250 dpi	6.4 x 4.8
<b>3 Megapixels</b>		
1984 x 1488	300 dpi	6.6 x 5.5
	250 dpi	7.9 x 5.9
<b>5 Megapixels</b>		
2660 x 1920	300 dpi	8.6 x 6.4
	250 dpi	10.2 x 7.7
<b>6 Megapixels</b>		
3032 x 2008	300 dpi	10.1 x 6.7
	250 dpi	12.1 x 8.0
<b>7 Megapixels</b>		
3072 x 2304	300 dpi	10.2 x 7.6
	250 dpi	12.2 x 8.2
<b>8 Megapixels</b>		
3264 x 2448	300 dpi	10.9 x 8.1
	250 dpi	13.0 x 9.8
<b>10 Megapixels</b>		
3600 x 2400	300dpi	12 x 8
	250 dpi	14.4 x 9.6
<b>11 Megapixels</b>		
4064 x 2704	300 dpi	13.6 x 9
	250 dpi	16.3 x 10.8
<b>12.1 Megapixels</b>		
4256 x 2848	300 dpi	14.2 x 9.5
	250 dpi	17 x 11.4
<b>13.5 Megapixels</b>		
4500 x 3000	300 dpi	15 x 10
	250 dpi	18 x 12
<b>16.7 Megapixels</b>		
4992 x 3328	300 dpi	16.6 x 11
	250 dpi	19.9 x 13.3
This chart was calculated by dividing the pixel dimensions of a typical camera by the resolution.		