

# Cameras, cameras, cameras...

There's so many cameras; which one should I buy?

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Photo of the Navy Pier in Chicago shot with *Canon Powershot SD800 IS*.

There's something magical about reminiscing through photos and videos, and cameras are such fascinating tools for capturing these memories. There's a clear distinction between using my camera versus my phone. When I take photos with my camera, I feel more present, like I'm living in the moment. Over the past week, I have been researching cameras to help me capture my favorite memories, and here are my notes.

## Film vs Digital Cameras

The first thing I learned was about the two main types of cameras: film and digital. Each type has its own advantages and disadvantages, so I wanted to list the ones that stood out to me.

### *Film Camera:*

- To put it simply, a film camera (or analog camera) uses a film roll to capture the photos. This means you need to keep in mind which film you purchase in addition to the actual camera because each film type has its own benefits and drawbacks.
- Interchangeable film rolls allow lots of variety with the style of the photo. Using film also means there's a limited number of shots before you need to replace the film.
- With film cameras, you need to take your film to a photo lab in order to develop the photo. Due to using film, there is a higher range between the whites and blacks in an image and often higher resolution.

### *Digital Camera:*

- Digital cameras store photos in digital memory, meaning you store the photos in memory cards. This allows instant gratification, and images can be viewed right after shooting.
- Instead of changing film, many digital cameras have built-in filters and allow you to edit the photo directly on the camera.

I chose to purchase the *Panasonic LUMIX G100D* digital camera due to already having experience using a digital camera, the low price, and ease of use despite having many advanced features. The *Panasonic LUMIX G100D* also supports RAW image files, which is an advantage when it comes to [color grading](#).

### RAW vs JPEG Files

Many digital cameras shoot and save their images as either JPEG or RAW files (a setting that can be changed in the camera settings), and each file type has its own pros and cons.

#### *JPEG:*

- A JPEG file is far smaller in size than a RAW file and is supported by many more devices and software.
- JPEGs also don't require as much work when editing. This is due to the camera doing most of the work for you when capturing a JPEG. However, since the camera does a lot of the work for you, the JPEG image is stylized based on the camera producer.

#### *RAW:*

- RAW images are uncompressed, meaning there won't be any drop in resolution. JPEGs go through a compression process, which makes the file smaller but also loses details.

- RAW images are also more malleable, meaning easier to edit to the style you want. When I want to control the vibes of the image/video, I would use a RAW file format.

### Types of Film Cameras

Despite only ever using digital cameras, the mechanical nature of film cameras tempts me into making an investment in the film world. The two main types of film cameras that captured my interest were the point-and-shoot and SLR cameras.

#### *Point and Shoot:*

- As the name suggests, a point-and-shoot camera is very simple; all you have to do is point and shoot.
- They are small and lightweight, and if I were to purchase my first film camera, it would be a point-and-shoot.

#### *SLR:*

- An SLR camera or Single-Lens Reflex camera has much more control than a point-and-shoot.
- You are able to change the lens, adjust for light, and shoot manually. However, this makes for a heavier, more technical camera.

As someone who lives and breathes engineering, researching the technical beauty of cameras was a joyful process. The mechanics and chemistry that elegantly unite to capture the light onto a layer of film makes me engrossed in learning more. As I mentioned previously, I just purchased a Panasonic LUMIX G100D, so look out for a newsletter reviewing it in the future.

Thanks for listening, I hope that this was somewhat informative. If you have any tips, ideas, comments, or concerns, feel free to respond to this email! I'd love to chat.

- PJ

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