

## Digital Photography Kit: Olympus C-2500L SLR Digital Camera, Epson Photo 1270

The combination of this Olympus camera and Epson printer was the crossover moment for me. I've been a professional photographer (on and off) with film since 1960. Now I'm a digital photographer to stay, and happier than I ever was with film. Digital is now more convenient, cheaper, more malleable, more forgiving, and more directly usable in Power Point presentations, e-mail attachments, and on the Web. With the Epson printer I get handier prints that are the equal in quality of anything I got from film from my own dark-room work or commercial shops.

In particular the Olympus C-2500L does all the work of an excellent SLR (single lens reflex) film camera. It offers all manner of options in terms of settings, degrees of resolution, and in-camera viewing of images. Each image can hold a hefty 2.5 megapixels of data. Even reduced to 1-to-7 JPEG compression, they still print big 8 x 10-inch color prints that look like excellent film prints, only with far more adaptability. Best of all, since shooting digital means you can be "wasteful" of film (there's no film), the camera has enormous storage capacity in two different systems (called flash systems), SmartMedia (up to 64 megs) and Compact Flash (up to 256 megs and growing). So in my normal shooting I can take 250 high-quality images in one go. Download those to my laptop (you need to get a flash reader device to do it quickly), and I'm ready for another 250 images. The camera



### Olympus C-2500L SLR Camera

\$1,000 street  
from, for example, Amazon

### Epson Stylus Photo 1270 Printer

\$440 street  
from, for example, Amazon

## Olympus Stylus Zoom 140

I haven't made the switch over to digital yet. My photographic interests take me to distant lands where batteries and flash memories are in short supply, but good old 35-mm film is plentiful. Here's what I need in a camera:

- 1) Must slip into my pocket easily. Seriously.
- 2) Must use ordinary film, not the expensive and hard to find APS variety.
- 3) Must be a point-and-shoot auto-focus device.
- 4) Must have a wide zoom range, preferably from wide angle to telephoto.

This last requirement is key. With sufficient zoom a tiny palm camera can produce a large variety of angles and viewpoints. A point-and-shoot camera outfitted with a 38-140 zoom can mimic 80 percent of what a heavy-duty SLR camera can do. I've used dozens of these pocket zoomers and the smallest,



Stewart Brand in action with the filmless Olympus camera.

comes with a battery charger and very good Camedia software for viewing, printing, and lightly manipulating the pictures—cropping, brightness, contrast, some color correction, etc. For most of my pictures I never bother with PhotoShop. Result...even this jaded professional photographer and his unjaded wife are now shooting all the time, and when you shoot all the time you get amazing stuff, including the most familiar (and in time most important) things like morning sun in the kitchen.

With the Epson Photo 1270 Printer (which works fine doing ordinary printing) you get shockingly good color prints at something under a dollar a print, and you get them right now, exactly the way you want. The printer can handle 11 x 14-inch prints and even long panoramas (which the Camedia software can stitch together). Friends who see the prints want the whole system. For \$1,600 total (including a USB flash storage reader), they're there.

(Incidentally, great comparison reviews of all digital cameras can be found at [www.steves-digicams.com/hardware\\_reviews.html](http://www.steves-digicams.com/hardware_reviews.html))

—SB

clearest, zoomiest camera I've been able to find (that uses ordinary film) is the Olympus Stylus Zoom 140. It is handy enough that I tuck one in my pants pocket while traveling, while the quality is super enough to have its pictures published in national magazines. With its 140-mm lens you can zoom in nicely from afar. When I'm shooting a hundred rolls per trip, the memory cards for digital would clobber me. It won't be this way for long, but for now this camera, together with cheap processing of film at Costco, is the way to go for large quantities of images away from home.

—KK

### Olympus Stylus Zoom140

\$260 street  
from, for example, Amazon

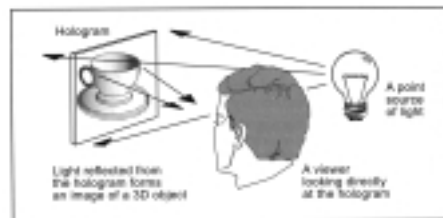


## Shoebbox Holography

Ever since laser pointers became drugstore items I wondered if you could use them to make holograms. You can. This book tells how.

—KK

There are many laser pointers in the market today, ranging in price from a few dollars to hundreds of dollars. In many instances, with the more expensive models you are paying for the fancy casing or adjustable optics. (There are only a handful of diode laser manufacturers in the world, so many times the expensive pointer and the cheap pointer actually contain the same laser.)...Fortunately, the simplest, most rugged (and often least expensive) laser pointers work best for the experiment described in this book.



The shoebbox holograph set-up. Laser pen is mounted on the right. A couch shell on the left sits on a motion dampening foundation. A white card is used to focus where the film plate will be.



### Shoebbox Holography

A Step-By-Step Guide to Making Holograms

Using Inexpensive Semiconductor Diode Lasers  
Frank DeFreitas, Alan Rhody, and Steve Michael  
2000, 128 pages

\$16.95  
Ross Books  
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