

Picture quality settings

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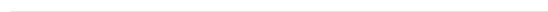
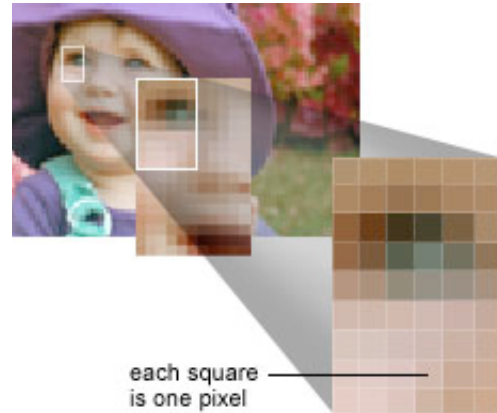


When you think about taking pictures you have to think about the final image. The more information your digital camera can capture, the larger your final print can be.

Understanding picture quality settings

Pixel is shorthand for "picture element." It is the smallest part of a digital camera's sensor. The word "mega" means "million." So megapixel means the picture is made up of one million pixels, or picture elements.

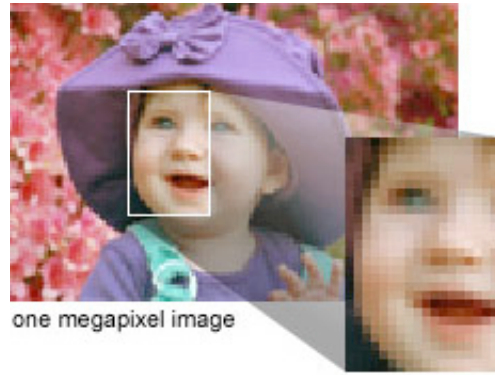
The size of a digital camera's sensor, the part that records the image, is expressed in megapixels. The greater the number of megapixels, the more information this sensor can capture and the more an image can be enlarged.



Making sense of resolution

With all those pixels in my camera, how do I know how much I am capturing? To make sense of capture resolution, think about the area of a rectangle. The area is the length multiplied by the width. In the case of a digital camera sensor, the number of horizontal pixels times the number of vertical pixels is the capture resolution.

Let's use the Kodak EasyShare DX3900 zoom digital camera as an example. The number of horizontal pixels is 2,160. The number of vertical pixels is 1,440. When the two numbers are multiplied, the result is 3,110,400 pixels or 3.1 megapixels. If you know the size of print you want, you can use the table below as a guide to the capture resolution you need.



Maximum Print Size	Capture Resolution Needed
5 x 7 inches (15 x 20 cm)	1 megapixel
8 x 10 inches (20 x 25 cm)	2 megapixels
11 x 14 inches (28 x 36 cm)	3 megapixels
20 x 30 inches (50 x 75 cm)	4 megapixels

So what do "Best," "Better," and "Good" mean?

Some digital cameras let you select the level of compression that the camera will apply to your captured image by choosing settings, such as "Best," "Better," and "Good." When you want to make large prints, use the "Best" setting for your camera. If you don't have a high-capacity picture card, consider using the "Better" setting, which lets you capture a lot of images and still retain acceptable image quality. If you want to create pictures for Internet use or online display only, consider using the "Good" setting.

Capture Option	Picture Quality	Results of Capture	Printing Capability
Best	Excellent	Larger file size, most detail. Fewer images captured per picture card. Requires more storage space.	Largest prints possible for file size. Cameras with resolution of 3 to 4 MP will give prints up to 20 x 30 inches (50 x 75 cm).
Better	Acceptable	Medium file size. More images captured per picture card.	Limits size of final print to 8 x 10 inches (20 x 25 cm) or smaller.
Good	Lowest acceptable quality	Less detail. Greatest number of images captured per picture card.	Print sizes limited to 5 x 7 inches (15 x 20 cm) or smaller.