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Sony releases world's highest resolution full-frame D-SLR¹ – the α900

Serious photographic tool delivers ultra-fine, high image quality with its unprecedented, proprietary 24.6 megapixel, 35mm full-frame Exmor CMOS sensor

Sydney – 23-25 September, 2008 – Sony has delivered a breakthrough in digital imaging technology with the launch of its flagship α (Alpha) D-SLR model, the α900. Sporting the highest resolution in its class, this serious photographic tool delivers ultra-fine, high image quality with its 24.6-megapixel, 35mm full-frame size “Exmor” CMOS sensor. The result is not only unprecedented image detail, but also a wide dynamic range that enables subtle colour and tonal gradation to be captured just as the human eye sees them.

Key features of the new α900 digital SLR from Sony include:

- The world's first “SteadyShot Inside” body-integrated anti-shake system for a full-frame size D-SLR
- Speedy image processing from a dual BIONZ image processor
- Bright, full size 100% highest performance optical view finder



“Sony has cemented its place in the D-SLR world with the launch of this innovative camera,” said John Wallace, Sony Australia’s Business Development Manager for Digital SLR. “With the world’s highest megapixel resolution available on a 35mm full-frame CMOS sensor, this camera produces stunning digital images with perfect clarity and resolution even in large print sizes.”

World's highest 24.6-megapixel resolution

The α900 is at the cutting edge of digital imaging technology with the world's highest 24.6 megapixel resolution on a 35mm full-frame size CMOS sensor. Utilising the full merit of photographic expressive power, this never-before-achieved resolution delivers virtually noiseless images and allows wider angles and perspective only possible with a 35mm full frame size SLR.

¹ As of 9 September 2008; based on digital SLRs that incorporate 35mm full frame size resolution

Produced using proprietary Sony planarisation technologies to ensure an ultra-flat surface across the entire imaging area, it uses over 6000 on-chip column parallel analogue/digital converters to convert analogue signals to noise-resistant digital signals at the earliest possible stage. The ISO sensitivity ranges from 200-3200 in 1/3 EV steps (ISO 100-6400 can be set as an expanded range).

World's first SteadyShot Inside body-integrated anti-shake system for full-frame size

A world first, the α900 integrates the SteadyShot Inside anti-shake system into its body, achieving an anti-shake effect equivalent to shutter speeds faster by 2.5 to 4 stops with a larger and heavier image sensor. The body-integrated system delivers stabilisation even for wide, fixed-focus, large aperture lenses, which is usually difficult for a lens integrated system.

This sensor-shift, optical image stabilisation system works with all α series lenses², including wide, fixed focus and large aperture lenses, which have traditionally been difficult to implement in lens-based stabilisation systems. To prevent dust particles from marring images captured, a special anti-dust coating is applied on the low pass filter to prevent dust adherence. Also, an anti-dust mechanism vibrates the sensor at high speed every time the camera is switched off.

Dual BIONZ image processor

Equipped with two BIONZ image processing engines working parallel to process high pixel count image data with top level speed, the α900 is customised to get the most out of the 24.6 megapixel "Exmor" CMOS sensor, especially when shooting continuously at five frames per second. Optimised for the α900 and working hand-in-hand with the image sensor, the dual BIONZ engines work to deliver natural colour reproduction, rich tones, as well as excellent image resolution with minimum noise.

The D-Range Optimiser³ (including an Advanced mode that offers five optimisation levels for finer control) adjusts exposure and tone for a more natural-looking and balanced exposure, even for backlit shots.

Bright, full size 100% highest performance optical viewfinder

A 100% coverage viewfinder supports delicate framing for the serious photography enthusiast. The viewfinder is bright, clear and easy-to-see with minimal aberration thanks to the adoption of a condenser lens and highly refractive elements into its optics, delivering truly exceptional brightness with approximately 0.74x magnification and virtually no distortion. A user-replaceable, high quality focusing screen is available in both L-type (grid pattern) and M-type (super spherical acute matte), both sold as optional accessories.

² Lenses include all Sony α series lenses, Minolta and Konica Minolta AF lenses

³ The D-Range Optimiser uses technology provided by Apical, Ltd

Implemented for the first time on the α900 is the Intelligent Preview function, which allows users to capture a shot into the internal camera memory and simulate the effect of various camera settings on it, such as exposure, white balance and D-Range Optimiser. As the settings are changed, users can preview the resultant photo directly on the 3-inch, 921,600-dot "Extra Fine" LCD monitor. To finally capture the shot using the adjusted setting, users can simply press the shutter release button. Intelligent Preview offers a convenient, time-saving method of fine tuning image settings in advance and is a great complement to the traditional depth of field preview.

The α900's Creative Style options now sports a total of 13 image styles – all of which can be tuned to suit your artistic preference. Adjustment parameters include contrast, saturation, sharpness, brightness and zone matching. The Custom button on the rear of the camera is set to open the Creative Style menu by default, but it can be assigned to any of the other 15 tasks.

Dual-cross nine point AF sensor system, durable and lightweight performance and PhotoTV HD

A newly developed centre dual-cross nine point AF sensor system is used in the α900, with two cross-type sensors used for the centre AF point. The result is extremely fast and accurate autofocusing in low lighting and low contrast situations. A dedicated F2.8 sensor is also added to the centre of the frame to enhance accuracy when shooting using F2.8 or larger aperture lenses. Furthermore, 10 additional, invisible AF sensors assist in subject detection when Wide Area AF mode is selected. Out-of-focus detection range and detection algorithm are also improved to reduce focus hunting – resulting in an overall faster and smoother focusing drive.

With PhotoTV HD, users can easily enjoy their photos in high definition on any compatible BRAVIA HDTV using an HDMI cable. The α900 is capable of recording images at either a 3:2 or widescreen 16:9 aspect ratio. The new Intelligent Preview function can also be used when the camera is connected to an HDTV.

For a durable and reliable performance, the α900 features a front, back and top made of strong but lightweight magnesium alloy. Controls, terminals, viewfinder and other sensitive components are further protected from dust and moisture by rubber seals. Approximately 880 images can be taken on a single charge of the NP-FM500H InfoLithium battery. Dual memory card slots on the camera accept both Memory Stick Duo™ recording media and CompactFlash® cards. UDMA cards are also supported. The Quick Navi information display allows users to switch between both slots quickly. In addition, the optional VG-C90AM vertical grip accepts two batteries and boasts the same rugged, yet lightweight, dust and moisture-resistant magnesium alloy construction as the α900 body.

A 3-inch type "Extra Fine" LCD with approximately 921k dot resolution gives photo quality on-the-spot viewing. The α900 has an easy-to-see navigation display and easily accessible quick navigation menu, plus a display panel on the top of the camera with cinnabar-colour illumination.

Other Features

1. Built-in eyepiece shutter, backlit top LCD panel, AF micro adjustment function, mirror lockup mode, 3-frame +-2EV bracketing option and an interval shooting function (Windows only).
2. Designed for use with full-frame D-SLRs, the optional HVL-F58AM external flash unit features a revolutionary Quick Shift Bounce system, GN58 power, high-speed synchronisation at speeds up to 1/8000 of a second, colour temperature-based white balance compensation, ADI (Advanced Distance Integration) flash metering and wireless multi-flash control.
3. Easy-to-use bundled software includes:
 - a. Image Data Converter SR (version 3.0)
 - b. Image Data Lightbox SR (version 2.0)
 - c. Remote Camera Control (version 2.0)
 - d. Picture Motion Browser (version 3.2.01)

a900 Specifications Sheet

Type		Digital SLR camera for use with interchangeable lenses
Lens mount		Sony α mount
Lens compatibility		Sony α lenses, Minolta and Konica Minolta AF lenses *1
Image sensor	Image sensor	35mm-film format (35.9 x 24.0mm), Exmor CMOS sensor
	Effective pixels	Approx. 2460 megapixels
	Total pixels	Approx. 2570 megapixels
	Aspect ratio	3:2
	Anti-dust function	Charge protection coating on low-pass filter, image-sensor shift mechanism
	ISO sensitivity (Recommended Exposure Index)	ISO200-3200 in 1/3 EV steps (ISO100 - 6400 can be set as expanded ISO range) ISO Auto Range: ISO200-1600, ISO400-1600, ISO400-800, ISO200-800, ISO200-400 selectable
Recording	Image format	JPEG (DCF2.0 and Exif 2.21 compliant, DPOF supported), RAW (Sony ARW 2.1 format), RAW & JPEG
	Image Size	[Aspect Ratio 3:2] L size: 6048x4032 (24M), M size: 4400x2936 (13M), S size: 3024x2016 (6.1M)
		[Aspect Ratio 16:9] L size: 6048x3408 (21M), M size: 4400x2472 (11M), S size: 3024x1704 (5.2M)
		[APS-C Size Capture] L size: 3984x2656 (11M), M size: 2896x1928 (5.6M), S size: 1984x1320 (2.6M)
	Image quality modes	RAW, cRAW (compressed), RAW & JPEG (Fine), cRAW (compressed) & JPEG (Fine), Extra Fine, Fine, Standard
	Media	Memory Stick Duo, Memory Stick PRO Duo, Memory Stick PRO-HG Duo, CompactFlash (Type I/Type II, UDMA Mode 5 compliant), Microdrive
	Card slot	Dual slot for Memory Stick Duo/CompactFlash, Selectable with Quick Navi or from Setup Menu
	Noise reduction	Long exposure NR: On/Off selectable, available at shutter speeds longer than 1 sec., High ISO NR: High/Normal/Low/Off selectable at ISO 1600 or higher
Colour space	sRGB/Adobe RGB selectable from Recording Menu	

	Creative style		13 image styles: Standard/Vivid/Neutral/Clear/Deep/Light/Portrait/ Landscape/Sunset/Night View/Autumn Leaves/B&W/Sepia Adjustable parameter: Contrast/Saturation/Sharpness/Brightness/Zone Matching * 6 settings can be registered *Saturation cannot be set for B&W and Sepia.
	D-Range Optimiser		Mode: Off/Standard/Advanced Auto/Advanced (Lv 1 to 5)
			DRO Advanced Bracketing: 3 frames, Hi/Lo level selectable
White Balance	Modes		Auto, Daylight, Shade, Cloudy, Tungsten, Fluorescent, Flash, Colour Temperature (2500-9900K) with colour filter (19-step magenta/green compensation), Custom (3 settings can be registered) White Balance Bracketing: 3 frames; Hi/Lo level selectable
Focus	Type		TTL phase detection system
	Sensor		CCD line sensors
	Focus point		9 points (centre dual-cross type) with 10 assist points
	Sensitivity range		EV 0 - 18 (at ISO100)
	Modes		Single shot AF (AF-S), Automatic AF (AF-A), Continuous AF (AF-C), Direct Manual Focus (DMF), Manual Focus (MF)
	Focus area		Wide, Spot, Local (9 local focus areas, selectable with multi selector)
	Features		AF Micro Adjustment (+/- 20-step increments for up to 30 different lenses), Predictive control, Focus lock, AF illuminator (LED, Range: approx. 1-7m, Auto/Off selectable)
Exposure	Metering		Type: TTL metering
			Metering Cell: 40-segment honeycomb-pattern SPC
			Range: EV 0 - 20 (EV 2 - 20 in spot metering mode) (at ISO100 with F1.4 lens)
			Mode: Multi segment, Centre-weighted, Spot
	Exposure control		Mode: Auto, Program Auto (P, with program shift), Aperture priority (A), Shutter priority (S), Manual (M)
			Exposure Compensation: +/- 3 EV, 0.3 / 0.5 EV steps selectable
			Exposure Bracketing: 3/5 frames selectable, Single or Continuous selectable, 0.3/0.5/0.7/2.0 EV steps selectable *2.0 EV bracketing limited to 3 frames

Viewfinder	Type		Fixed eye-level, pentaprism	
	Field coverage		Approx. 100%	
	Magnification		Approx. 0.74x (with 50mm lens at infinity, -1m ⁻¹)	
	Diopter adjustment		-3.0 to +1.0m ⁻¹	
	Eyepoint		Approx. 20mm from the eyepiece (at -1m ⁻¹)	
	Focusing screen		Spherical acute matte screen (G type) User-replaceable L type (Grid type) and M type (Super spherical acute matte type) available (with both types optional)	
	Viewfinder display	Focusing screen		AF area, Spot AF area, Spot metering area, Shooting area for aspect ratio 16:9, APS-C size area
		Other displays		Flash compensation, Flash charging, Wireless flash, High-speed sync, Manual focus, Focus signal, Shutter speed, Aperture, EV scale, AE lock, Shot-remaining counter, Camera shake warning, SteadyShot scale, Aspect ratio 16:9
Eyepiece shutter		Built-in		
LCD Monitor Display	Type		3.0-inch type* Xtra Fine LCD *Viewable area, measured diagonally	
	Total number of dots		921,600 dots	
	Coverage		100%	
	Brightness adjustment		Adjustable in +/- 5 steps	
Preview Function			Intelligent Preview/Optical Preview selectable from menu	
Display Panel			Shutter speed, Aperture, Exposure compensation, White balance, ISO sensitivity, Drive mode, Battery remaining, Remaining number of recordable images, with illumination	
Shutter	Type		Electronically-controlled, vertical-traverse, focal-plane type	
	Speed range		1/8000 to 30 sec., Bulb	
	Flash sync. speed		1/250 sec. w/o SteadyShot INSIDE, 1/200 sec. w/ SteadyShot INSIDE	
SteadyShot INSIDE (Image Stabilisation)	Type		Image-sensor shift mechanism	
	Indication		SteadyShot scale and camera-shake warning in the viewfinder	
	Compensation effect		Equivalent to approx. 2.5 to 4 steps in shutter speeds (varies according to shooting conditions and lens used)	
Flash Control	External flash		α system flash units (optional)	
	Control		ADI , pre-flash TTL	
	Flash compensation		3 / 5 frames, +/- 3EV, 0.3 / 0.5 EV steps selectable	
	Modes		Autoflash, Fill-flash, Rear sync, Wireless*, Slow sync, High-speed Sync, *HVL-F58AM, HVL-F56AM, HVL-F42AM, HVL-F36AM supported; full multi-flash functionality requires at least one HVL-F58AM	
	Flash bracketing		3 / 5 frames, 0.3 / 0.5 / 0.7 / 2.0*EV step selectable *2.0EV bracketing limited to 3 frames.	
	Sync terminal		Built-in, adaptable to the sync. terminal of the opposite polarity	

Drive	Modes		Single, Continuous (Hi/Lo selectable), Self-timer (10 sec. /2 sec. delay selectable), Mirror lockup, Remote commander
	Continuous shooting speed		Hi: approx 5 frames per sec. (max.), Lo: approx. 3 frames per sec. (max.)
	Number of frames recordable		Standard: 285, Fine: 105, Extra Fine: 11, RAW: 12, cRAW: 12, RAW & JPEG: 10, cRAW & JPEG: 10
Playback			Single (with or without shooting information, with 4 previous/following images, RGB histogram, & height light /shadow warning), 4/9/25-frame index view, enlarged display mode (max. zoom ratio: L size: 19x, M size: 14x, S size: 9.4x)
Interface	PC interface	Type	USB2.0 Hi-speed Mass Storage / Multi LUN / PTP / PC Remote Control
		Supported OS	Windows: Windows 2000 Professional/Windows XP/Windows Vista Macintosh: Mac OS X (v10.1.3 or later)
	Video output		NTSC/PAL selectable
	HDMI output		HDMI mini connector, 1080i/720p/SD selectable (optional HDMI cable necessary)
	Remote control	Wired	
Wireless Control			With supplied Remote Commander
	Other		PhotoTV HD supported
Print Function	Compatible standards		Exif Print, Print Image Matching III, PictBridge
Power	Power source		One Rechargeable Battery Pack NP-FM500H One CR2025 for Wireless Remote Commander
	Battery performance		Approx. 880 shots (measured using CIPA standard)
	External power source (AC adapter)		AC Adapter/Charger AC-VQ900AM (optional)
Weight			Approx. 850g (1 lb 14 oz) (w/o battery, memory card, accessories)
Dimensions			Approx. 156.3 (W) x 116.9 (H) x 81.9 (D) mm (excl. protrusions) 6 1/8 x 4 5/8 x 3 1/4 inches
Operating Temperature			0 to 40 degrees C (32-104 degrees F)

*1 DT lenses are not recommended for use with 35mm full-frame sensors due to their differing image circle size, which may affect light metering accuracy in certain shooting situations.

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Price and availability

Model	Description	Price (inc GST)*	Availability
α900	Body only	\$4,499	Mid October

* Prices are subject to change without notice. Please confirm price prior to publication.

Availability: The α range is available through consumer electronic retailers and camera specialty stores nationally, from Sony Centre stores in major capital cities and online at www.sony.com.au

Information: For further information on Sony's α range, readers can contact Sony Australia on 1300 720 071 or visit www.sony.com.au/dslr.

Images: High-resolution images are available from ProductBank, a free online digital imaging delivery service at www.productbank.com.au. If you would like assistance with this service, please contact Hausmann Communications on 02 9361 3777.

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