

# Advanced Options

*Take the next step with digital single-lens reflex cameras and housings.*

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**D**igital cameras are just now taking a strong hold on the underwater marketplace. With each passing day, more divers are switching to housed digital point-and-shoot cameras.

Manufacturers are providing housings for the more popular point-and-shoot cameras such as the Nikon Coolpix 995, Olympus C-3030, Sony SDC-S75 and Canon G2. The advantage of these systems is that they are compact, have plenty of features and usually include around three megapixels of storage capacity. Some higher-resolution point-and-shoot cameras include the Nikon 5000 and Olympus C-4040. These economical digital cameras usually cost less than \$1,000, with the same cost for a housing. They make up the bulk of the under-

water digital cameras used today.

But what sort of digital options are available for the advanced amateur or professional underwater photographer? These shooters are used to the flexibility of housed SLR (single-lens reflex) cameras, with lens interchangeability, through-the-lens viewing and motor-driven film advance. Thanks to the introduction of several SLR camera housings, these photographers can shoot digital underwater, too.

## MAKING CHOICES

SLR housings can be divided into two distinct groups.

The first type of camera housing bridges the gap between point-and-shoot cameras and SLR cameras, so we have

dubbed this collection bridge cameras. Most have all the features of the SLR camera except that they come with a permanently mounted zoom lens. This allows you to cover the entire range of photography from wide angle to telephoto with a single lens. This group includes the Olympus E-20n, Sony DSC-F707, Minolta DiMage 7 and Fuji FinePix 6900 Zoom.

Light & Motion has just introduced the Titan housing for the Olympus E-10n and E-20n cameras. This housing comes with a revolutionary new strobe-control device that gives the user up to 12 manual power levels on most common TTL-compatible strobes. For more details, call 831-645-1525 or check out our expanded coverage of this product at [www.sportdiver.com/jun02/titan](http://www.sportdiver.com/jun02/titan).

The second type of housing is designed for SLR digital cameras. These cameras have all the features of an SLR film camera and generally use the same interchangeable lenses. Since most advanced amateur and professional photographers have already made a significant investment in flashes and lenses, the addition of a new digital camera body and housing can provide them with even more versatility.



**Light & Motion Titan SLR digital housing**

The biggest advantage of both types of SLR cameras is the ability to see the exact image in the viewfinder. This allows critical focus calculations and composition decisions. Often these factors are the difference between a prize-winning picture and an ordinary snapshot.

With SLRs, there is no time delay between pressing the shutter and taking the picture. This time delay is one of the biggest downfalls of underwater point-and-shoot cameras, especially when trying to capture a fish in motion.

#### **PROVIDING SOLUTIONS**

Since point-and-shoot digital cameras dominate the underwater world at this time,

you'll find very few housed digital SLR cameras. This is understandable because the relatively low demand for an SLR system makes for a costly investment for manufacturers. Thankfully, though, some have taken the plunge and provided solutions for photographers who demand the quality of digital SLR underwater.

Ikelite came to our rescue when we asked them to house our Fuji FinePix S1 Pro



**Seacam D1X SLR digital housing**

SLR digital camera. We quickly headed down to test the system at Sunset House on Grand Cayman. There was very little difference in handling between the digital camera and a film camera, except that we could now shoot more than 36 exposures. We also were able to view each shot after we took it



**Ikelite SLR digital housing**

and make corrections or modifications.

The people at Ikelite can make custom housings for many different SLR digital camera models. To find out more, call 317-923-4523 or go online and visit [www.sportdiver.com/ebrochure/ikelite](http://www.sportdiver.com/ebrochure/ikelite).

There is a new addition to the SLR housing market with the introduction of the Seacam, designed to house the Nikon D1, D1X and D1H cameras. This heavy-duty, compressed aluminum housing is marketed in the United States by underwater photographer Stephen Frink. Go online and visit [www.seacamusa.com](http://www.seacamusa.com) for more information. 

*Send your questions to [digitalduo@jackandsuedrafahl.com](mailto:digitalduo@jackandsuedrafahl.com).*