

MadisonPhotoPlus the Photo Summit **e-Photo Newsletter**

May, 2005

A top ten list

Down through the years we hear many misconceptions about photography. Taking a page from David Letterman, here is a "top ten" list compiled over the years. They're all true - learn and enjoy.

#10 - All processing and printing is the same

This is probably the biggest misconception in all of picture taking. This is the equivalent of all food tasting the same, all chairs being equally comfortable, and all temperatures feel the same. The differences in film processing, and analog or digital printing is **always** a 60% minimum of the outcome of the picture. The photographer, film, lighting, camera, lens, flash, subject, etc. make up the smaller portion.

#9 - Everything about photography should be black.

No one really thought this was before television. The silver in photographic film is sensitive to light, so it must be kept in darkness except during exposure. Different films, however, are blind to specific color wavelengths. Most black and white paper, for example, is insensitive to red light, so the darkroom can be bathed in red light (at least more than enough to read by) with no negative effects (no pun intended).

Most people prefer black camera cases for the same reason (suspected photographic safety), while it is usually the worst available choice. Most cameras today have plastic shells, which can warp under intense heat. Film is extremely susceptible to heat damage. Many plastics (such as vinyl and nylon) exude a gas when heated, which puts a film on everything it touches (like your car's windshield on a hot day). A black case **absorbs heat**, which helps ruin most contents. A light colored case is a much better choice.

#8 - My pictures are secure on the internet.

Sorry, but NOTHING is truly safe on the internet. Ask any 13-15 year old. Pictures are as safe on the internet as your wallet is sitting on a platform at a train station. If a person's identity isn't safe on the internet, how can pictures be safe?

#7 - My pictures are secure on my hard drive.

And the tooth fairy is the Easter Bunny's mother. Computer hard drives are magnetic recordings. MAC or PC, old or new, they are all magnetic. Any substantial magnetic or electric impulse will rearrange their magnetic fields. Bye bye data; bye bye pictures.

#6 - Only "brand X" accessories will work on my "brand X" camera.

If this were truly the case, GM cars would only work with GM gasoline. As another example, let's look at Nikon cameras (it could be any brand, but everyone reading this has surely heard of Nikon). Nikon, like every other Japanese camera maker, has never made every product which bears its trade name. Nikon has never made a leather or leatherette case. They are not leathersmiths. They do not make all their own lenses, and don't make any of their flashguns. Their batteries obviously come from another source. The manufacturing of a battery and a lens aren't quite the same. There is no such thing as Nikon film either.

In short, people who **blindly** buy the brand named item because it must be better **all the time** are not making good financial sense.

#5 - Single use cameras take pictures equal in quality to more expensive, reusable cameras.

Single use cameras use a broad latitude (jack of all trades, master of none) color print film which will capture an image in almost any amount of light. It has one shutter speed (usually 1/125 sec.), and one aperture and is prefocused at 10-12 feet away.

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If the lighting is just right, the pictures look almost as good as a 40 year old Kodak *Brownie* camera's. The wide exposure tolerance of the film allows pictures to be taken in other lighting conditions. The flash gives the proper exposure at 10', and falls off very quickly.

Agfa, Fuji, Konica and Kodak make all the new single use cameras on the market, but even these companies sell some that have been recycled. All other brands are recycled camera shells, used batteries and the lowest bid films (in date or not). The tolerances on these recycled cameras are not as tight as with brand new ones, but the films (in theory) compensate for that. Also notice that no single use cameras have ever been made by Canon, Hasselblad, Leica, Mamiya, Nikon, Olympus, Pentax, Rollei, Yashica or any other camera manufacturer.

#4 - "Brand X" color film had terrible color. Only "Brand Y" film has good color.

The basic flaw here is that the color paper and processing has more to do with the color than the film does. Each different paper has its own dyes, and these dyes are what you see. The final output is a combination of the film, the paper, the chemistry, the lab equipment and the talent of the printmaker. The best color usually comes from a printmaker who has control over the entire process, and can keep the standards of the lab consistent.

#3 - A picture taken with a flash at a concert will be better than the same picture taken without a flash.

One sees flashes firing at concerts, sporting events, etc. Nobody gets to see the pictures that these photographers take. Because they don't come out (except in rare, extremely lucky instances). Flashes just don't reach those dozens or hundreds of feet

away. Taking a picture with the flash turned off will allow the camera to use its maximum aperture and a long shutter speed, thereby increasing the possibility of a good exposure. Spectators sitting in nose-bleed heaven at Madison Square Garden still hope to get pictures of their favorite hockey player scoring a goal with a slap shot. Sorry - it just won't happen.

#2- There is never a need for a tripod.

There is a law in photography: a picture taken using a tripod is always sharper than when the camera is handheld. It is a law because it is true. The only reason for a tripod is to support a camera to eliminate all (or at least most) camera movement during the time the image is being recorded. The sturdier the tripod, the sharper the image. End of discussion.

A tripod, however, is not the entire answer. If the photographer is still touching the camera or tripod, some vibration is still affecting sharpness. A remote release or self timer should also be used (as well as a device called a mirror lockup is available on SLR cameras).

#1 - Digital pictures aren't as good as pictures from film.

This is the easiest of all ten to disprove. You don't know which pictures you are looking at. When viewing a good photo, the input type isn't an issue, because everything had worked correctly in making the image. Years ago, people complained about bad pictures from Disc cameras (rightfully so). These were film cameras. Fewer years ago, people complained about digital camera pictures (again rightfully so). For the past few years digital photos are just as good as film photos - possibly even better. Advances in software, cameras and printers have closed the gaps. A viewer today cannot tell the difference between pictures with the naked eye.

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Wasn't that exciting? How about informational?

There are still a couple of available seats for our lighting workshop on May 17th. Please remember that your reservation is not secure until paid. The last 5 pages following will be of interest to many readers as it discusses the differences in batteries for digital and other cameras. You don't always get what you pay for, as you'll see. Please excuse some formatting issues, as this file was manipulated to fit the software used in constructing this newsletter. Have a great May! Keep on shooting, and we hope to see you soon.

Lynne & Jerry


the Photo Summit

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Better **I**maging **P**hoto **S**chool

Why do pictures look the way they do? 

I can take portraits at home! Really?


I want to photograph items to sell on ebay.

Photography is the Study of Light.

The next session in the Madison PhotoPlus and the Photo Summit photo school will be about controlling light. Whether you prefer photographing people, pets, artwork or other items a firm understanding of how light works is essential to success.

In this workshop you can learn how to understand and control light and improve your picture taking. Whether you use film or pixels makes no difference - the light doesn't care! Now that you're used to your camera, learn how easy it is to take better pictures.

The lighting workshop will be held at Madison PhotoPlus on May 17, 2005 at 7:00 pm. Space is limited to 15 people, so reserve your seat early! The cost for the evening is only \$30, which includes refreshments.



CANON 511 COMPARISON

PROMASTER® CONSTRUCTION vs COST REDUCED CONSTRUCTION

The following review was done to compare the battery construction between a PROMASTER® battery and a battery with “Cost Reduced Construction.”

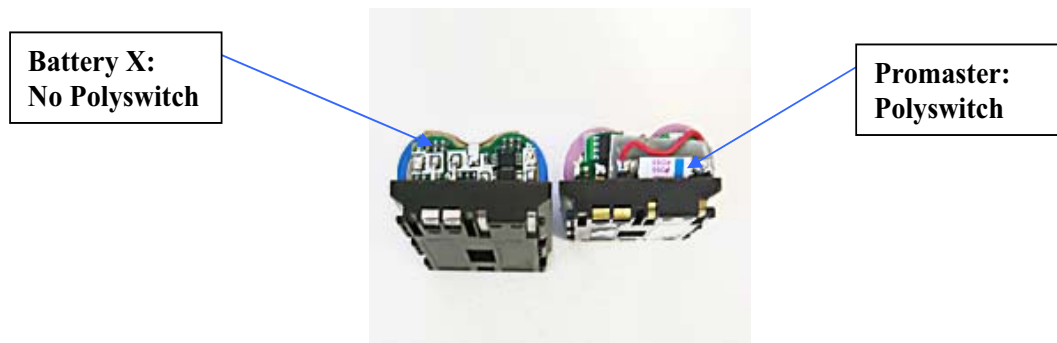
I will refer to the PROMASTER® battery as “Promaster” and the “Cost Reduced Construction” battery as “Battery X.”

THE COMPARISON WAS CONDUCTED FOR A DIGITAL BATTERY FOR THE CANON 511.

1. A review of both packs **battery construction** was conducted and the following was found:

- A) Most importantly, the Promaster battery has a polyswitch for thermal protection, whereas the Battery X does not. Without thermal protection, a battery can easily fail or explode due to the lack of protection from heat and overcharge.

SEE PICTURE # 1



PICTURE # 1

- B) Upon reviewing the Intercell straps on both items, the Promaster pack had a 1/4” strap between the Li-Ion cell and Battery X had a 1/8” strap. Using a 1/4” strap allows for better conductivity between cells. Also, Battery X’s small strap allows for easy breakage, which would cause the battery to fail.

SEE PICTURE # 2.



PICTURE # 2

CANON 511 COMPARISON

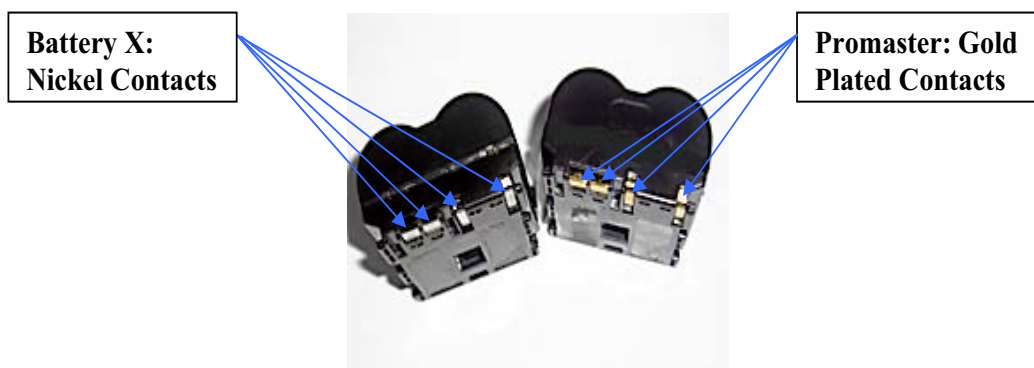
PROMASTER® CONSTRUCTION vs COST REDUCED CONSTRUCTION

C) The Li-ion cells on the Promaster pack are glued and Battery X is not. This could cause the battery to fail. The glue prevents the cells from separating and rattling, which could result in the battery failing.

2. Initially, a comparison of the **batteries' appearance** was conducted and the following was found:

A) The Promaster battery has gold plated contacts; Battery X has nickel contacts. Based on general industry knowledge, gold plating provides better conductivity than nickel.

SEE PICTURE # 3



PICTURE # 3

B) The two batteries plastics vary in color. The Promaster battery is more similar in appearance to the “OEM” battery than Battery X.

SEE PICTURE # 3

C) Upon opening both packs to review the sonic seal, the Promaster battery had a higher quality, stronger seal than Battery X.

NIKON EN- EL3 COMPARISON

PROMASTER® CONSTRUCTION vs COST REDUCED CONSTRUCTION

The following review was done to compare the battery construction between a PROMASTER® battery and a battery with “Cost Reduced Construction.”

I will refer to the PROMASTER® battery as “Promaster” and the “Cost Reduced Construction” battery as “Battery X.”

THE COMPARISON WAS CONDUCTED FOR A DIGITAL BATTERY FOR THE NIKON EN-EL3.

1. A review of both packs **battery construction** was conducted and the following was found:

- A) Upon reviewing the intercell straps on both items, the Promaster pack has a 1/4” strap between the Li-Ion cell; Battery X has two 1/8” intercell straps, which are badly welded. The poor welding could potentially cause a short resulting in the battery failing. Also, Battery X’s small strap allows for easy breakage, which would cause the battery to fail. Using a 1/4” strap, allows for better conductivity between cells as well.

SEE PICTURE # 1



PICTURE # 1

- B) The Li-Ion cells on the Promaster pack are glued and Battery X is not. The glue prevents the cells from separating and rattling, which could result in the battery failing. The Promaster pack also has a piece of foam tape which prevents the pack from rattling and protects the intercell strap.
SEE PICTURE # 1
- C) Both packs have circuitry for protection, but the Promaster pack has an extra fuse that Battery X does not. This extra fuse provides added protection against overcharge, undercharge, and voltage surge, which may result in the failure of the battery.
SEE PICTURE # 2.

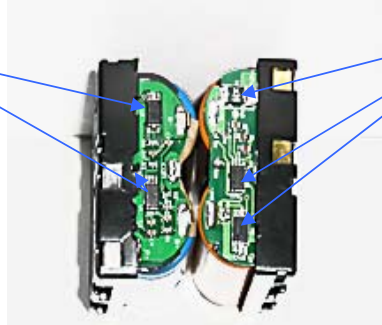
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NIKON EN- EL3 COMPARISON

PROMASTER® CONSTRUCTION vs COST REDUCED CONSTRUCTION

**Battery X:
2 Fuses for
Circuitry
Protection**



**Promaster:
3 Fuses for
Circuitry
Protection**

PICTURE # 2

- D) The Promaster pack ICR18500 cells and the Battery X pack LC18490 cells have the same capacity, but the ICR18500 can handle a higher draw than LC18490. Consequentially, the ICR18500 is a better choice of cell.
SEE PICTURE # 3



**Battery X:
Equal Capacity,
Less Draw**

**Promaster:
Equal Capacity,
Higher Draw**

PICTURE # 3

2. Initially, a comparison of the **batteries' appearance** was conducted and the following was found:

- A) The Promaster battery has gold plated contacts; Battery X has nickel contacts. Based on general industry knowledge, gold plating provides better conductivity than nickel.
SEE PICTURE # 4

**Battery X:
Nickel Contacts**



**Promaster: Gold
Plated Contacts**

PICTURE # 4

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NIKON EN- EL3 COMPARISON

PROMASTER® CONSTRUCTION vs COST REDUCED CONSTRUCTION

- B) Both batteries have the same color plastics. They are both black and have the same look. SEE PICTURE # 4
- C) Upon opening both packs to review the sonic seal, the Promaster battery had a higher quality, stronger seal than Battery X.