

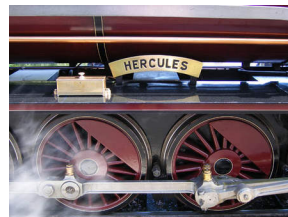
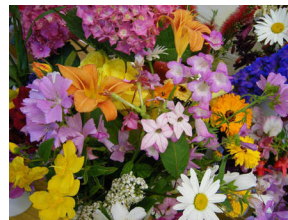
<http://www.pocket-lint.com/review/1662/fuji-finepix-f470-digital-camera>

Fuji FinePix F470 digital camera

Can this standard camera really cut the mustard?

by Doug Harman published on 4 August 2006

Featherweight it may be in terms of physical dimensions and weight but it also featherweight in specification. The F470 has standard 6-megapixel sensor (as opposed to a Fuji SuperCCD) at the top of its spec' billing, 10-scene modes include the usual bits and bobs, such as portrait, landscape and sports and a flower close-up mode among others. Unusually, a manual mode is also included within the scene modes, which affords a modicum of control over exposure compensation (to +/-2EV in 1/3rd stop steps) and white balance settings (you don't get the former in other modes and the latter is automatic in others) but both adjustments are buried within menus, so it's not very fast or user friendly if you need to get quick adjustments. Each menu is contextual, providing a different set of available options depending on what mode or scene setting you've set the camera to use. So, while menus are too prevalent in terms of speed off use and control, they are otherwise easy to navigate. A few external controls particularly for white balance and exposure compensation would not go amiss on the handling front. And that's the rub, with such a svelte camera, the more buttons and controls you stick on the outside, the bigger it has to be, and the one thing the F470 does not have is lots of real estate for buttons. A shutter release and on/off control sit atop the camera with a mode switch incorporated into the shutter button surround. There are three settings, Auto, Movie (640x480-pixel movies (max) with sound at 30fps) and Scene Position, where you can access the aforementioned scene modes. On the front, the camera's 3x optical zoom lens is very nice providing bags of detail all the way to the image extremities and gives a 35mm to 105mm (35mm film equiv.) focal length range, enough for most general uses. While on the back plate, a large 2.5-inch colour screen dominates with the lens zoom control, playback, the "F" Photo Mode button, four way jog control, menu and display toggle buttons.



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The four-way control also provides for the flash, macro, self-timer and LCD brightness controls. The lack of an optical viewfinder is another concession to the camera's smallness and the LCD brightness control on the back only goes some way to help as the screen is quite reflective; in bright conditions the screen can still be a challenge to use. Images can be stored on the camera's 16MB of internal memory but you'll get just five images if that's all you use; factor in the price of an additional external xD-Picture Card in your budget, it's the camera's removable storage of choice. Power is supplied by a neat little lithium-ion rechargeable battery pack from which you will get around 200-images according to Fuji, in reality, I got around 130-shots with plenty of reviewing but not much use of flash. Connectivity is via a USB2.0 Hi-Speed port and cable; you get a DC-in socket and AV out port too. Other features include an in-camera image trimming function and voice annotation while PictBridge and EXIF Print are also built in to help out with direct print functionality with compatible printers. In terms of handling and speed the F470 is fast but with noticeably more focus lag at the full zoom end than at the wide end, however, it is not so bad as to cause major issues. The shutter lag is negligible making it a surprisingly quick to get snapping once the focus has finished, so overall, at this level, the camera is very responsive for most "normal" shooting situations. Disappointingly, where the response is less good is with sensitivity, which is particularly modest, providing an ISO range of auto, 64, 100, 200 and 400; the last setting providing not enough scope for low light snaps without flash and without noise problems. This is particularly so when compared to Fuji's higher end models such as the F30 Zoom, which can get up to the dizzy heights of ISO 3200. The ISO 400 setting here provides a noise performance best described as poor. Otherwise, detail in images is sharp, colours are well rendered - barring the F-Chrome setting that boosts colours well beyond what I'd call natural looking - and auto white balance copes well in all but the most mixed of lighting. Focus

At a glance

What is it?

6-megapixel entry level camera

Good

Great build and very compact design, lightweight, fast operation, good image quality at lower ISO settings, simple to use

Bad

No optical viewfinder, low top ISO setting,

Verdict

The F470 is neither a revolutionary camera nor a particularly dull camera, it does have the benefit of an excellent price point

Price £199

Our score

8/10

Your score

?/10

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and metering are unerringly accurate so overall you get a good balance of ease of use and image quality.

VERDICT

I started out on this test by stating the F470 is neither revolutionary nor dull, yes it has a great, svelte design and its attractive metal body is tough. Its price makes it an attractive proposition too and while it may lack some finesse at higher ISOs, in brighter conditions and for general subjects it is unlikely to let you down.