

<http://www.pocket-lint.com/review/1854/pentax-k10d-dslr-digital-camera>

## Pentax K10D DSLR digital camera - FIRST LOOK

Does the K10D live up to the hype?  
We get a brief first hands look at  
Photokina

by Doug Harman published on 18 October 2006

I was introduced to the new Pentax flagship DSLR at the massive photo trade show, Photokina that's held every 2 years in Cologne, Germany at the end of September.

The K10D had already created a bit of buzz around some of its new technologies. Pentax claims over 30 new patents had been filed in the development of the new camera, so Pentax was anxious for us to recognise, while a lot of the camera's features sound similar on other makers models, they were not.

Hefting the camera for the first time it's certainly robust the plastic body on a metal chassis feels tough. The camera is sealed from the environment being both dust and weather (read splashing rather than dunking) proofed. It's slightly larger than it's K100D and K110D siblings and features a much busier looking exterior.

The back plate is particularly busy with the new, large screen (see below) and host of the more usual controls on such cameras. One that is not, is the dedicated RAW capture button (also see below for more on RAW format shooting options) that can be set to quickly get you into the various shooting modes: RAW, RAW+JPEG/JPEG modes and is extremely useful.

A neatly swooping body houses the new, 10.2-megapixel sensor (apparently not that made by Sony as used in many other manufacturer's DSLRs) that feeds data to a new PRIME processor with 22-bit colour depth. Pentax claim this means the K10D is the only DSLR to feature DDR2 RAM, which the K10D employs.



...cont.

The usefulness of 22-bit colour is, basically, finer gradations of colour - particularly in shadows, but it will have to be fully tested once we get to play with a camera in earnest, as both its RAW and JPEG files will be downsampled (on PC for example) to 12-bits or 8-bits respectively.

Other neat kit includes a proprietary CCD-Shift anti shake mechanism, which uses magnets and bearings to enable both x-axis and y-axis movement and apparently, movement around the lens axis as well. Pentax claims up to the equivalent of four stops in shutter speed stabilisation.

As is now increasingly common, the K10D has a dust reduction system that uses a special ultra-slippery coating on the low-pass filter to stop dust settling, then it shakes the sensor vertically to remove other dust particles and a sticky pad below catches the errant dust motes.

There are a couple of great new shooting modes as well. First up must come the Sensitivity Priority Mode, which automatically chooses the optimum aperture and shutter speed combination for a given ISO (or sensitivity). The latter can also be shifted (in 1/3 or 1/2 stop steps), making the whole thing much faster to use and again, very useful.

Another pair of great shooting features includes the Hyper Program and the Hyper Manual modes; the former means you can quickly change to Shutter Priority or Aperture Priority from the Program AE setting at the spin of dial. The latter, in manual shooting mode, allows you to quickly set the correct exposure settings via a single push of the camera's green button. This button is used for various quick changes depending the modes you're in and its "quick" function changes depending on the mode.

A bright clear pentaprism finder is great to use and the 11-point AF set up it reveals is also great with no less than nine cross-type sensors. You

---

## At a glance

### What is it?

Pentax digital SLR with 10.2-megapixel CCD sensor

### Good

Large screen on rear of camera, proprietary CCD-Shift anti shake mechanism, great new shooting modes

### Bad

It's early days, but its looking like there won't be much wrong here

### Verdict

On paper at least, it looks a tempting proposition for both potential users and Pentax because there are over 23-million compatible Pentax K-mount lenses worldwide,

**Price** 649 - &pound;749

## Your score

# 10/10

...cont.

can shoot continuously at a claimed 3.3fps to the limit of your storage; incidentally, the K10D uses SD and SDHC external storage. The camera can also capture up to nine RAW files at 3fps before buffering off the captured shots.

The camera is designed to accept the many (30-million worldwide) Pentax optics that already grace the camera bags of Pentax users around the globe but is also designed to accept the new and highly anticipated Supersonic Direct-drive lenses (similar to Nikon's Silent Wave lenses and Canon's Ultrasonic Motor optics) due out later in the year.

Some of the more familiar kit includes a shutter speed range from 30-seconds (plus bulb) to 1/4000th second. TTL metering is via a 16-segment system that is coupled to the lens in use, so it reads focus information too, plus there is exposure compensation to +/-3EV and auto bracketing (3 or 5-frames) to +/-2EV in 0.5, 1.0, 1.5 and 2.0EV steps.

And Pentax claims noise control and characteristics of the new camera are "very good", so sensitivity runs from ISO 100 to ISO 1600 in 1/3EV and/or 1/2EV steps, plus there's a full auto mode, which looks a tad modest by some standards.

A built-in pop up flash joins the more mundane bits and bobs found on today's DSLRs, which would also not be complete without a large screen, and here the K10D has a 2.5-inch LCD with a wide (140-degree) viewing angle.

## **VERDICT**

The Pentax K10D is packed full of kit, too much in fact to list here effectively, but it looks like a little gem.

It's packed with cool, but more importantly user-friendly features (a digital depth of field is another good example, it doesn't replace optical depth of field checking, it backs it up by allowing you to

<http://www.pocket-lint.com/review/1854/pentax-k10d-dslr-digital-camera>

...cont.

take a snap then check the image on the screen to assess depth of field), is robust and has some neat technology that should help get better results more easily.

In terms of pricing, a body-only price (as detailed at Photokina) is set for a £649 price tag. A lens kit including an 18-55mm zoom will retail for £749, so perhaps it looks just a tad pricey, but watch this space.

Finally, over many years reviewing cameras of all types, Pentax has consistently produced some great products and looking at the K10D, it is continuing that great tradition. So for one, I can't wait to get one to play with.