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Casio Exilim EX-S880 digital camera

Is 8 megapixels enough?

by Stuart Miles published on 21 January 2008

While most manufacturers are pushing 12 megapixel compact cameras, Casio's latest camera is an 8 megapixel shooter that promises a bunch of consumer friendly tech, but is it enough? We get snapping to find out.

The 8.1-megapixel EXILIM EX-S880 is the successor to the company's EX-S770 model and offers virtually an identical feature set.

It also means it comes in the same compact shell as well as coming in a range of colours including a red wine red colour, silver or charcoal grey. The body; made from metal, houses a 2.8-inch screen, a 3x optical zoom and overall dimensions are 94.5 x 60.4 x 17.3mm. Weight wise and the camera is shirt pocket light (128g) making this a great accessory for any party as you'll probably no even realise it's there.

The controls layout on the back remains the same and for those not sure what this actually is, you get a zoom control on the back rather than the top of the camera, a d-pad to access the menu system and access to the cameras Best Shot mode.

On the top, besides the shutter and the on/off button you get the buttons for switching camera modes from still to video and a data button that allows you to turn the camera into a portable hard drive and enables users to carry data transferred to the camera from a computer once you've installed the PC or Mac software.

The software works by treating your camera as a printer that you can print documents to allowing you to view them on the go if need be. It's a novel idea, but do you really need to view documents on the back of your digital camera? And if it's a case of using the feature so you can transport files using your memory card, then why don't you just copy them on to the memory card by



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dragging and dropping them when the camera is connected? You might not be able to view them in transit but we can't see you wanting to, unless you've been ingenious enough to transfer a Tube map or something to it.

In use and the layout works, with the menu system easy to understand and access, the buttons are responsive and the zoom on the back means you can get your thumb to do the work rather than your shutter finger as you would with a Fuji for example.

Get past the design and the camera offers still and movie modes with a number of pre-determined options and manual controls for both.

On the movie front you get a high-quality movie function that makes the most of next-generation H.264 compression technology (the format that can be played on the iPhone) as well as Casio's YouTube BEST SHOT Mode, which enables users to shoot and save movies at the optimum size, quality and other settings for YouTube (640 x 480 resolution).

Casio has also included a software application in the box that makes it fast and simple to upload movies to YouTube at the press of a few buttons.

Casio is not the first manufacturer to include specific YouTube functionality in their gadgetry, Apple, Helio, LG and most recently Samsung are also offering YouTube features but if your aim is to share your movies with the world on the website, the software certainly makes it easier than doing it in the traditional way via YouTube's web forms.

The core purpose of the camera is of course its ability to take pictures. Here you get all the regular functionality and features you would expect, and include a few that you might not, like the ability to program your family's faces so you can make sure they are in focus in a group shot over other people in the shot.

At a glance

What is it?

8-megapixel camera

Good

Picture quality, build quality, design, ease of use

Bad

Not much

Verdict

The Casio EXS880 is a good little snapper that is well built, compact and takes great pictures

Price £135

Our score

8/10

Your score

?/10

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With a fast start up time, and a maximum of 4 shots per second (although you will have to shoot at a considerably reduced megapixel count of 2 megapixels) at this speed the S880 is a nippy performer that is sure to let you get the shot you need.

As for picture quality we were pleased with the results. Pictures have good colour balance and thanks to the non-ridiculous megapixel count (remember its only 8 rather than 12) noise isn't really an issue.

The S880 does have an anti-shake mode, operated by a button on the top of the camera, however to reduce the shake you make it merely increases the ISO setting. The result is a sharper picture, but one that is filled with slightly more noise - a trade off that you might not be willing to accept.

VERDICT

The Casio EX-S880 is a good little snapper that is well built, compact and takes great pictures.

We especially like the family focus face recognition software that means the important people in your life are in sharp focus and the host of other features including the YouTube filming mode if that is your thing.

Against the S770 there isn't much difference here apart from the increase in megapixels but like its predecessor, it's a good solid camera from Casio.