

DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY – THE MISSING MANUAL
By Chris Grover and Barbara Brundage

This is a \$29.95 book that deserves to be on your bookshelf and to be read, reread, and referred to several times.

Part One – the first 3 chapters are involved with the basics of taking digital photographs.

Chap. 1 – This chapter deals with image resolution for viewing and for printing. It also discusses memory card types and how many pictures can be stored on a card. Other topics covered in this chapter deal with batteries, optical and digital zoom, and the importance of image stabilization. There is a great deal of information related to using the manual options aperture priority, shutter priority, white balance and setting the ISO. Additional topics in this chapter discuss minimizing shutter lag, using burst mode, creating panoramas and minimizing “noise”.

Chap. 2 – This chapter concerns itself with the elements of composition, the rule of thirds, getting closer for better pictures and how to eliminate busy backgrounds.

Chap. 3 – Here the authors go beyond the simple snapshot and go into depth about the following topics: shooting sports and action, taking portraits, pictures of kids, weddings and other celebrations. The authors further discuss taking pictures of sunsets, night time photographs, landscapes and nature photography.

These first three chapters are worth the cost of the book.

Part Two –Several chapters are devoted to dealing with organizing photos.

Chap. 4 – Discussion of getting pictures from the camera to the computer and from a card reader to the computer. Also discussed are choosing and using a scanner, how to scan an image and how to use the Windows scanner wizard.

Chap.5 – How to organize photos with Windows XP. It addresses making folders, moving and copying photos, deleting them and using the photo properties menus. This chapter also discusses how to use Easy Share Albums and Picasa to create, organize, label, and edit photographs and how to become proficient using Easy Share and Picasa.

Chap. 6 – The authors discuss how to choose an on line photo service. They discuss how to upload to navigate through and use the features of Easy Share, Shutterfly, Snapfish and Flickr.

Chap. 7 – This chapter is devoted to backing up photographs on CDs, DVDs, and hard drives. It discusses the back up features of Easy Share and Picasa.

Chap. 8 – This chapter is devoted to organizing and backing up photographs using PhotoShop Elements. Topics covered include importing photos into the photo downloader and changing settings, a tour of the browser, creating tags and categories. Creating collections and using search criteria are also discussed.

Part 3 deals with editing techniques and editing programs.

Chap. 9 – The authors discuss basic photo fixes. They return to a detailed discussion of using the features of both Easy Share and Picasa to rotate, straighten and crop photos. Included are fixing exposure and contrast problems, fixing red eye problems, balancing color, and addressing several other fixes by using these programs.

Chap. 10 - Once again the authors discuss the use of Photo Shop Elements. Topics discussed include rotating photos, the use of the straightening tool, using the cropping tool, and resizing images for either printing or e-mailing.

Chap. 11 – Continues a discussion of the use of Photo Shop. The authors describe the quick fix toolbar, fixing red eye, adjusting lighting and contrast, correcting color and sharpening photographs.

Chap. 12 – Further describes the uses of Photo Shop. In this chapter, the authors emphasize some advanced photo retouching tools. Discussed are the shadows and highlights commands, sharpening images, fixing blemishes, color correction techniques, use and adjustment of levels, and changing hue and saturation.

Chap. 13 – This chapter deals with special effects: adding effects and undoing effects in Easy Share and Picasa. Also discussed are adding effects with Photo Shop Elements and using the program to create panoramas.

Part Four is devoted to sharing photos.

Chap. 14 – The authors discuss choosing, uploading and sharing photos online using Easy Share, Shutterfly, Snapfish, Flickr, and photo.net.

Chap. 15 – Here the authors describe how to use the following programs to e-mail photos: Easy Share, Picasa, and Elements. Choosing the correct file size, choosing the correct format, selecting photos, and choosing recipients are among the topics discussed.

Chap. 16 – This is devoted to printing. Topics include understanding resolution and print size, as well as how to tweak one's printer settings. Printing with Easy Share, Picasa, and Elements are all covered. Other topics include printing at photo kiosks and ordering prints on line with Easy Share, Picasa, Shutterfly, Snapfish and Elements.

Chap. 17 – This is the final chapter. It deals with how to make slide shows, posters, calendars, photo books and other creative projects such as photo mugs and T-shirts.