

Using the Mode Dial and Scenic Menus
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Digital cameras have an extensive series of menus. Menu options are categorized into 4 major groups:

Record (Picture Taking) Menus
Review (Play Back) Menus
Set Up Menus and
Scenic Menus.

The focus of this SIG presentation will be on mode dials and scenic menus.

The following is a list of options that may be found in the other categories. Each camera manufacturer (and each camera model) has a different set of menu options. The following are a typical, but not complete, set of possible options.

Record (Picture Taking) Menu Options

Flash Settings	Compression
Red Eye Reduction	White Balance
Digital Zoom	Exposure Value
Resolution	Photo Effects

Review (Play Back) Menu Options

Protect Images
Rotate
Resize
Erase All Images
View as a Slide Show

Set Up Menu Options

Sounds/Beeps
LCD Brightness
Date/Time Setting
Language
Format Memory Card

Scenic Menu Options

The following options will form the basis for this presentation.

Portrait	Foliage
Landscape	Indoor
Night Scenes	Beach/Snow
Sports (Action)	Sunrise/Sunset
Kids and Pets	Fireworks
Flowers (Close Up)	Aquarium

Mode Dials:

A mode dial can be found on most digital cameras except for the smallest ones which lack the space to include this useful feature. Functions available via the dial are clearly marked so the user does not have to search through the camera menus to make setting changes. Mode dial settings vary widely among the various makes and models of digital cameras but most will include the following user controllable settings:

Automatic –The computer presets almost all possible settings. Limited changes available to the user.

Program – Allows a choice of user controlled settings except for shutter speed and aperture.

Shutter speed –User selects the shutter speed and thus can take images of rapidly moving subjects. Camera sets the aperture.

Aperture – User selects the aperture resulting in the ability to change the depth of field. Camera sets the shutter speed.

Manual – User selects shutter speed and aperture as well as all other user controllable camera settings.

Movie – Allows users to take movies until the memory card is full.

Many cameras models have between 12 and 18 preset scenic modes designed to help the photographer when the default mode may not be able to fully compensate for some difficult shooting situations. Some Casio camera models have over 30 scenic settings.

This presentation will concentrate on the following 12 common scenic mode settings.

Portrait – Camera reduces exposure setting which results in a shallow depth of field so subject stands out. Background is slightly out of focus. Red eye reduction is turned on. User might wish to use a telephoto setting with a low ISO.

Landscape – Camera sets depth of field so everything in distance is in focus resulting in greatest detail for the scene. Camera also optimizes white balance settings for outdoors. User may consider using the vivid setting to further sharpen the image and enhance color and contrast. Remember to use the Rule of Thirds so horizon line is not in the middle of the frame.

Night scenes – Camera sets aperture, slower shutter speed and high ISO. Red eye reduction may be turned on when flash is used. Bright lights and dark background may cause a problem for the user. User should use a tripod or set camera on a very steady surface. Try to achieve most dramatic effects possible.

Sports (Action) – Camera sets high shutter speed, high ISO, continuous (burst) mode and rapid auto focus. User should have object in center of frame for proper focus and may wish to blur background by panning. To eliminate shutter lag, follow the action with the shutter release partially depressed. Need to use telephoto lens.

Kids and Pets – Camera sets fast shutter speed, high ISO, quick focusing and red eye reduction. Treat the photo opportunity like sports/action since kids and pets move very fast. May wish to use continuous (burst) mode and telephoto lens to avoid disturbing the scene. Try to capture them as cute as they are.

Flowers (Close Ups) – Camera disables flash and may focus down to less than 12". Consider using widest angle not telephoto lens setting and low ISO. Avoid windy days, distracting background, consider using tripod and setting self-timer to avoid camera vibration. Consider using the macro setting to focus down to 2"-5".

Foliage – Camera chooses settings in to increase color saturation and contrast. Consider shooting early in the day. Use vivid setting on cloudy days but not in bright sunlight. Tripod will be helpful.

Indoor – Camera sets long exposure, high ISO, and flash with red eye reduction. Problem may be with tungsten or fluorescent lighting. Use auto white balance, if necessary. May also have a problem with harsh, dark backgrounds. To keep subjects in sharp focus have a steady support for camera.

Beach / Snow – Camera sets white balance to reduce any bluish tinge. Images may be underexposed due to white or light colored background. May lose contrast. Try to expose for the subject not the background. Use flash to prevent faces from being too dark.

Sunrise/Sunset - Camera sets white balance to give warmer colors. Best color is just before sunrise and just after sunset. Clouds can enhance photographs. Avoid having the horizon in the middle of the frame. Use a tripod to offset slow shutter speed. Turn camera away from the sun. **DO NOT LOOK DIRECTLY INTO THE SUN.**

Fireworks – Camera sets low ISO, long exposure and turns off flash. Focus is set to infinity. Use a tripod; consider using "burst" mode to capture images. Listen for the explosion as the charge that lifts the fireworks is set off. Follow the light trail. Depress shutter as close as possible to the beginning of the explosion. Take lots of exposures.

Aquarium – Camera optimizes white balance and color, sets high ISO and fast shutter. Major problem is reflection off glass. Place lens mount on glass to avoid reflection. Turn off flash.