

Lancaster Senior Citizen Center

Computer Tip No. 13

Digital Cameras

Digital Cameras keep getting better and better. A 1-mega-pixel camera at one time was a very good camera. But things have changed. There are cameras that are 5 mp, 10 mp and higher.

First, a quick discussion. What are “mega pixels”? If we take a monitor screen at 640 x 480, (that’s 640 pixels across and 480 pixels down), we would have .307 mega pixels ((640 x 480) / 1000000). A 1280 x 960 screen would be 1.22 mega pixels.

Tying that back to digital cameras, and remembering that the higher the resolution (mega pixels) the better the picture:

- 2 mp is good for a 4 x 6 picture.
- 3 mp is good for an 8 x 10 picture
- 4 mp is good for an 11 x 14 picture
- 5 mp and higher are generally for professionals

Another thing to consider is the zoom factor. Judge the camera by the Optical Zoom. The Digital Zoom does not give you a sharp picture. A 6x zoom made up of 3 optical and 3 digital is not as good as a camera with 6 optical.

The storage media is where the pictures are stored after capture. How many pictures can be stored on the storage media, or memory.

Take a 128 mb memory storage unit:

$$\begin{array}{l} 640 \times 480 \text{ or } .307 \text{ mp picture } \dots \quad 128 / .307 = 156 \text{ pictures} \\ 1280 \times 960 \text{ or } 1.22 \text{ mp picture } \dots \quad 128 / 1.33 = 39 \text{ pictures} \end{array}$$

Like your computer, the more memory you have, the better it is.