

CANON SURE SHOT 130u



Vital statistics: 38–130mm f/5.6–12.5 • 2–1/560 sec • passive multipoint and spot autofocusing • 4.1x2.3x1.8 in, 7.7 oz with CR2 lithium battery • \$150, street price • www.usa.canon.com

Replacing a classic: We suppose all good things must come to an end, and indeed Canon has just discontinued the highly regarded Sure Shot Classic 120. Filling the slot in the lineup, though, is the very attractive Sure Shot 130u. Besides the slight boost in longest focal length (to 130mm, from 120mm), the 130u is remarkably compact, smaller and lighter than its already svelte predecessor. Straightforward operation is augmented by five custom functions that let the camera memorize your flash settings, for example, or delay auto-rewind.

Features: self-timer • night flash • eyepiece diopter adjustment • real-time shutter release • mode memory • optional rewind delay • continuous winding • exposure compensation

User profile: travelers and family record-keepers

Untested model

CONTAX T3



Vital statistics: 35mm f/2.8 • 1/6–1/1200 sec plus B • passive spot autofocusing • 4.1x2.5x1.3 in, 8.5 oz with CR2 lithium battery • \$700, street price • www.contax-cameras.com

Positively posh: The tiniest Contax T yet (at least in 35mm format) also has the biggest performance, notably the stunning quality of the six-element lens—extremely sharp, nearly free of flare, light falloff, and distortion. The T3 works fine as a pure point-and-shoot, but provides adjustments for the fusspot, like aperture setting and exposure comp., even lets you use filters (30.5mm screw-in with an adapter) or a separate shoe-mount flash. The AF is very fast and accurate. P.S. If you want this kind of quality in a zoom, the sister model Contax TVS III is for you.

Features: program, aperture-priority AE • night flash • infinity lock • exposure compensation • dual self-timer • manual-scale focusing • custom functions

User profile: serious shooters with bucks

When tested: July '01

FUJI ZOOM DATE 1000



Vital statistics: 28–100mm f/5.8–10.5 • 1–1/500 sec • passive spot autofocusing • 4.2x2.4x1.4 in, 6.4 oz with 123A lithium battery • \$200, street price • www.fujifilm.com

Good and wide: Fuji is very adept at coming up with dull names and neat cameras. Case in point: Look past the bland moniker of the Zoom Date 1000 and find beautiful, understated styling (a good bit of it metal), a sharp optic (rated VG–EX, with low flare due to the EBC lens coating), and a very readable, light-up LCD control panel. Most important, it has the exact focal length you need—from true wide-angle 28mm, to tight-portrait 100mm tele. Nice touches: The flash automatically varies power for an effect closer to balanced fill flash, and the macro setting achieves a superclose 1:5 magnification.

Features: triple self-timer • night flash • infinity lock • LCD illuminator

User profile: travelers and family record-keepers

When tested: May, '02

KONICA Z-UP 130E



Vital statistics: 38–130mm f/4.1–13 • 1.2–1/300 sec • passive multipoint autofocus • 4.5x2.5x1.9 in, 7.7 oz with CR2 lithium battery • price to be announced • www.konica.com

Compact long zoom: Konica's been doing this for a while, putting a pound of camera in a half-pound (in this case, 7.7 oz) package. The flagship of the latest "e" series Z-ups, the 130e has all the point-and-shoot standard features, plus some useful extras like backlight compensation, a setting to bump up exposure by a stop and a half. While lightweight, the 130e has a nice, blocky feel to it, and controls are simply marked and easy to operate. We expect a very competitive price on this model.

Features: self-timer • night flash • backlight compensation • infinity lock • eyepiece diopter adjustment

User profile: family record-keepers

Untested model

KONICA LEXIO 70



Vital statistics: 28–70mm f/3.4–7.9 • 1.3–1/500 sec •

active multipoint autofocus • 4.3x2.4x1.4 in, 6.9 oz with CR2 lithium battery • \$150, street price • www.konica.com

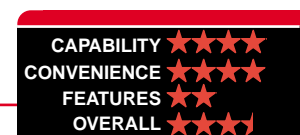
Pocketable wide angle: The Lexio 70 is heavily favored to make our list of all-time favorite point-and-shoots. With good reason: Its 28–70mm lens is exactly right for all-purpose snapshotting, and at f/3.4 at the wide end, it works well for available-light shots. The lens is quite sharp and contrasty (rating: VG–EX), too. The controls are easy to use, and readouts are pretty intuitive. User-friendly stuff includes a good viewfinder with (usable!) diopter correction, a flashtube with more than the usual oomph, a mode memory that remembers your settings, and a modicum of viewfinder info. It all folds up into a tiny, pretty clamshell.

Features: self-timer • night flash • infinity lock • backlight compensation • eyepiece diopter adjustment • LCD illuminator • mode memory

User profile: travelers and family record-keepers

When tested: August '01

LEICA MINILUX ZOOM



Vital statistics: 35–70mm f/3.5–6.5 • 1–1/250 sec

plus B, T • active spot autofocus • 4.9x2.9x1.7 in, 13.6 oz with CR123A lithium battery • \$850, street price • www.leica-camera.com

Posh you'll Leica: In the rarified atmosphere of posh compacts, zoom-lensed models are even rarer. But if you don't mind the entry price, you can have a titanium-bodied poshmatic with a seven-element Vario-Elmar lens and the grand old Leica name to boot—plus some other unusual touches for a compact. Chief among these is the Minilux Zoom's honest-to-gosh flash shoe, which accepts the dedicated Leica CF accessory flash, in addition to some SCA-compatible units. Fancy though the camera may be, operation is point-and-shoot simple, with a couple of overrides like manual focus and exposure comp.

Features: night flash • infinity lock • exposure compensation • self-timer • manual scale focusing • dedicated flash hot-shoe • LCD illuminator • mode memory

User profile: serious shooters with bucks

When tested: November '95 (standard Minilux, zoom model untested)

LEICA C3



Vital statistics: 28–80mm f/3.6–7.9 • 1–1/300 sec • active spot AF • 5x2.6x1.8 in, 9.6 oz with 123A lithium battery • price to be announced • www.leica-camera.com
Retro look in AF: Those rounded ends...that subdued chrome and black livery...why, it must be...a Leica C3! While some old-timers may see what looks like a classic rangefinder, and other old-timers may chuckle at that model designation (ask your grandpa), the C3 is a very modern, autofocus Leica compact with what (at least to us) is the preeminent useful zoom range for a P/S, 28–80mm. The camera has the full set of flash options and that certain *gestalt*. We haven't tested it yet, but given its specs (and handsome looks) we're confident in naming it one of our "Top Cameras."
Features: self-timer • night flash • eyepiece diopter adjustment • continuous winding
User profile: travelers and family record-keepers
Untested model

MINOLTA TC-1



Vital statistics: 28mm f/3.5 • 8–1/750 sec • passive spot autofocus • 3.8x2.3x1.1 in, 7.1 oz with 123A lithium battery • \$900, street price • www.minoltausa.com
Petite posh: How small is a Minolta TC-1? You can hide it under a credit card—you know, the one you just maxed out to buy this gorgeous little titanium thing. Its jewel-like character aside, the TC-1 is a top-performing camera for the user who doesn't mind some retro throwbacks, like the mechanical aperture setting, and focusing and exposure overrides via dials and levers (translation: not for the beginner!). In return, you'll be rewarded with supersharp, near-flare-free pictures from that fine wide-angle optic and precise AF system with focus-assist lamp.
Features: aperture-priority AE with safety override • centerweighted and spotmeter • infinity lock • exposure compensation • dual self-timer • manual scale focusing • LCD illuminator
User profile: serious shooters with bucks
When tested: June '98

MINOLTA FREEDOM ZOOM EXPLORER EX



Vital statistics: 28–75mm f/3.5–8.9 • 8–1/500 sec • active multipoint autofocus • 4.8x2.6x1.7 in, 8.6 oz with 123A lithium battery • \$150, street price • www.minoltausa.com
Own an original: Minolta's Freedom Zoom Explorer was one of the pioneering point-and-shoots to be equipped with a 28mm-to-tele zoom. The current version, the EX, continues as an ideal travel and family camera, with a focal length able to take in grand scenics and claustrophobic interiors. Modern classic though it may be, the EX is still a leading-edge camera with Minolta's Quad formula aspheric lens that dramatically reduces flare, and a high-accuracy 300-step AF system. The date/time version of the EX also provides on-demand panorama format, and provision for a wireless infrared remote controller.
Features: self-timer • night flash • continuous winding
User profile: travelers and family record-keepers
When tested: June '01

MINOLTA FREEDOM ZOOM 160



CAPABILITY	★★★★★
CONVENIENCE	★★★★★
FEATURES	★★★★
OVERALL	★★★★★

Vital statistics: 37.5–160mm f/5.4–12.4 • 10–1/500 sec • passive multipoint (full screen) and spot autofocus • 4.4x2.4x1.8 in, 6.5 oz with CR123A lithium battery • \$200, street price • www.minoltausa.com

Full-screen AF control: Minolta's FZ 160 would be a fine all-purpose camera for its sharp lens, good feature set, and easy-operating compact design. But what really sets it apart is the system called Area AF, which we consider a major breakthrough in point-and-shoot precision. The system can find focus almost anywhere within the frame, and shows it clearly via light-up LCD boxes. The camera corrects for parallax, too, and clever algorithms can detect shapes like human heads. It works, and works well. You can also switch to traditional center spot focus, or a basic tracking focus mode.

Features: Eye-Start autofocus • auto parallax indication • prefocus lock for remote-control shots • self-timer • night flash • backlight compensation

User profile: someone who wants a P/S with the works

When tested: August '02

NIKON LT ZOOM 130ED



CAPABILITY	★★★★★
CONVENIENCE	★★★★★
FEATURES	★★★★
OVERALL	★★★★★

Vital statistics: 38–130mm, f/5.3–10.5 • 2–1/500 sec • passive multipoint autofocus • 4.5x2.4x1.7 in, 7.1 oz with 123A lithium battery • street price, \$190 • www.nikonusa.com

Another zoom named ED: The Nikon Lite-Touch Zoom 120ED gets a bump up to 130mm to become this new model, and the rest of the good stuff stays pretty much the same. Most important is the ED designation of the lens, indicating the extra-low dispersion glass used in top-ticket Nikon SLR lenses for sharp and contrasty images. (Our tests of the Nikon ED point-and-shoot show that the glass lives up to its billing.) Add a good feature set, simple controls, and nice handling in an eye-catching clamshell package, and you have a worthy little bundle.

Features: self-timer • night flash • eyepiece diopter adjustment • panorama format

User profile: travelers and family record-keepers

When tested: February '01 (Lite-Touch Zoom 120ED)

OLYMPUS INFINITY STYLUS EPIC



CAPABILITY	★★★★★
CONVENIENCE	★★★★★
FEATURES	★★★★
OVERALL	★★★★★

Vital statistics: 35mm f/2.8 • 4–1/1000 sec • active multipoint and spot autofocus • 4.3x2.3x1.5 in, 4.7 oz with 123A lithium battery • \$90, street price • www.olympusamerica.com

Faster, cheaper: How much camera can you expect to get under \$100? In the case of the Stylus Epic, you get a fast, five-element 35mm f/2.8 with sharpness equaling many an SLR optic, a metering system that reads color temperature (and will compensate for fluorescent light with a pop of fill flash), spot and full-area evaluative metering, and splashproofing. Besides those high-end features, it has the full range of P/S flash modes. It also folds up in a clamshell and fits in any pocket.

Features: self-timer • night flash • weatherproofing • spotmeter • fluorescent-compensating flash

User profile: smart people who like little sharp cameras

When tested: October '97

■ OLYMPUS STYLUS 100 WIDE



Vital statistics: 28–100mm f/4.6–11.9 • 1–1/300 sec • passive multipoint and spot autofocusing • 4.5x2.4x1.7 in, 8.2 oz with 123A lithium battery • price to be announced • www.olympusamerica.com

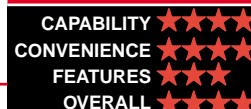
Stylish Stylus wide angle: We think this is a really neat camera. We've now seen quite a few point-and-shoots in this 28mm-to-100mm-or-more range, but leave it to the original clamshell experts, Olympus, to come up with one this eye-catching. Besides the (streamlined, silvery) clamshell, there's the characteristic pop-open flash in the corner, and expected Olympus features like spotmetering, infinity lock, and eyepiece diopter adjustment. We're happy they went with the higher-capacity 123A battery, too, instead of the wimpier CR2.

Features: self-timer • night flash • infinity lock • weatherproofing • spotmeter • eyepiece diopter adjustment • continuous wind

User profile: travelers and family record-keepers

Untested model

■ PENTAX IQ ZOOM 105WR



Vital statistics: 38–105mm f/4.5–11 • 4–1/400 sec plus B • passive multipoint and spot autofocusing • 5.2x3x2.3 in, 12.7 oz with 123A lithium battery • \$200, street price • www.pentax.com

Pentax slopomatic: If you're reading through this "Top Camera" section because you: 1) dropped your old P/S in a puddle, 2) got cake and champagne all over your P/S at your nephew Marvin's wedding, or 3) tend to drool on your camera, go no further! The IQZoom 105WR has Class 5 weatherproofing, which means it will tolerate more than just a splashing, but a soaking—in fact a brief full dunking. And if you get the camera schmutzed up, you can rinse it off under running water. Aside from that, this easy-to-grip camera with its rubberlike coating is a fine general-purpose point-and-shoot.

Features: self-timer • night flash • infinity lock • panorama format • eyepiece diopter adjustment • weatherproofing

User profile: travelers and family record-keepers—the more careless ones

When tested: June, '99

■ PENTAX IQ ZOOM 120SW



Vital statistics: 28–120mm f/5.6–12.8 • 2–1/400 sec plus B • passive multipoint and spot autofocusing • 4.4x2.3x1.6 in, 6.7 oz with CR2 lithium battery • \$200, street price • www.pentax.com

Longest wide one: Now that there is almost a glut (!) of point-and-shoots with 28mm-to-tele zooms, it's getting tough to stand out in the crowd. The pretty little IQZoom 120SW zooms all the way out to 120mm, yet is compact enough to fit in the ISO-standard shirt pocket. This aluminum-bodied camera uses a compact lens design with several aspheric elements. It's sharp and dang near flare-free, but yes, we sure wish it was at least a stop faster.

Features: self-timer • night flash • LCD illuminator • panorama format • infinity lock • eyepiece diopter adjustment

User profile: travelers and family record-keepers

When tested: February '02

ROLLEI PREGO 30



CAPABILITY ★★★★★
CONVENIENCE ★★★★★
FEATURES ★★★★★
OVERALL ★★★★★

Vital statistics: 30mm f/3.5 • 1/3–1/300 sec • active spot autofocus • 3.9x2.5x1.2 in, 5.6 oz with CR2 lithium battery • \$150, street price • www.rollei.de/en

New pocketable in town: As we've noted, the small single-focal-length point-and-shoot is a seriously endangered species, despite very real advantages for the candid shooter. Consider Rollei's brave little Prego 30, which has a moderately fast, true wide-angle lens, all the standard flash choices, and exceptionally sharp optical performance (lens rating: EX). It's all wrapped up in a cute, real aluminum body so small many mistake it for an ELPH-class APS camera. What's not to like? That it doesn't have a zoom? Get over it!

Features: self-timer • night flash • continuous winding • infinity lock

User profile: smart people who like sharp little cameras

When tested: November '02

ROLLEI AFM 35



CAPABILITY ★★★★★
CONVENIENCE ★★★★★
FEATURES ★★★★★
OVERALL ★★★★★

Vital statistics: 35mm f/2.6 • 1/2–1/1000 sec plus B • passive spot autofocus • 4.8x2.4x1.3 in, 8.8 oz with CR2 lithium battery • \$500, street price • www.rollei.de/en

Quietly posh: Don't let the simplicity of the Rollei AFM35's basic point-and-shoot operation fool you into thinking its lens is anything but pro-caliber. The aspherically tweaked Tessar formula lens posted the highest resolution numbers we've seen yet from a point-and-shoot. The largish, metal-clad body is remarkably lightweight and, with its rubberlike surfaces, handles excellently. Fussy shooters can opt for aperture-priority auto or manual focus, or a few other overrides like exposure compensation. But we think most users will set it to "auto" and enjoy its quiet, silky operation.

Features: program/aperture-priority AE • night flash • infinity lock • exposure compensation • backlight compensation • autobracketing • self-timer • manual-scale focusing

User profile: serious shooters with bucks

When tested: March '02

ROLLEI PREGO ZOOM 160



NEW
CAPABILITY ★★★★★
CONVENIENCE ★★★★★
FEATURES ★★★★★
OVERALL ★★★★★
UNRATED CAMERA

Vital statistics: 38–160mm f/5.8–12.6 • 1–1/400 sec • passive spot autofocus • 4.4x2.4x1.9 in, 8.9 oz with CR2 lithium battery • \$260, street price • www.rollei.de/en

Smaller camera, longer zoom: That says it all, as Rollei takes the Prego 125/140 idea and stretches the snout out to a 160mm telephoto, all the while shaving a fraction of an inch off here and there. Some of the more superfluous features of the older Prego models were deleted, while nicer touches, like sensor-balanced flash, were added. This feature reduces flash power for closeups, and uses fractional fill in daylight portraits for a more natural look. The new gunmetal-gray aluminum exterior is darkly handsome, we think. Haven't tested the lens yet, but Rollei zooms have been consistent winners in the past.

Features: self-timer • night flash • infinity lock • eyepiece diopter adjustment • panorama format

User profile: someone who wants a P/S with the works

Untested model

SAMSUNG EVOCA 90W NEO



Vital statistics: 28–90mm f/4.5–11 • 1/3–1/400 sec plus B • passive multipoint and spot autofocusing • 4.6x2.6x1.7 in, 9.2 oz with 123A lithium battery • \$170, street price • www.samsungcamerausa.com

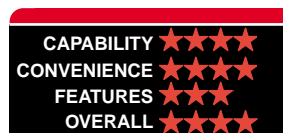
The Schneider wide-angle: Way, way back in the dark days when more timid manufacturers wouldn't go near a 28mm zoom P/S, a bold upstart named Samsung made one—a 28–90mm model, no less. Well, Samsung is back with an even better wide zoom, the Evoca 90W Neo. It has a Schneider-designed lens, the usual raft of Samsung features, and a nice grippable body in the cool Evoca Neo style. Samsung zooms have tested very well over the past years, and we'll let you know how this one does soon.

Features: double self-timer • night flash • panorama format • infinity lock • eyepiece diopter adjustment • optional audible warnings • step zoom • auto portrait zoom • snap mode • continuous winding

User profile: travelers and family record-keepers

Untested model

YASHICA ZOOMATE 165EF



Vital statistics: 38–165mm f/6.7–13.1 • 2–1/300 sec • passive multipoint auto-focusing • 4.6x2.5x2 in, 8.9 oz with 123A lithium battery • \$210, street price, with Super Flash • www.yashica.com

Gets the redeye out: Only one device works with any real reliability to prevent redeye—a separate flash unit that keeps the flashtube far enough away from the lens axis. That's exactly what the “Super Flash” for the Zoomate 165EF does, and it works very well, besides more than doubling flash range. The flash adds only about 3 oz in weight, and couples fully to the camera the moment you mount it in its easy-operating quick-release shoe. On its own, the 165EF is a full-featured, nice-handling camera with much to recommend it.

Features: self-timer • night flash • panorama format • infinity lock • macro (1:3) mode • eyepiece diopter adjustment • panorama format • dedicated shoe for accessory Super Flash

User profile: someone who wants a P/S with the works

When tested: April '01