

Upgrading to the EOS 5D Mark III

A fast track guide to get you up to speed and shooting

Includes detailed explanations of

Differences in camera layout

The menu system

Configuring the camera

The focusing system

The image processing options

The custom modes

The custom buttons

The live view options

The movie options

Plus much more besides



Written by Nina Bailey

PREVIEW
EDITION

A person in a red and gold Chinese opera costume is breathing fire. The fire is bright yellow and orange, with a large plume of smoke. The person is wearing a red mask with a white face and a red tongue sticking out. The costume is red with gold and blue embroidery. The background is dark.

Written, designed and images by
Nina Bailey

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Foreword by the author

Upgrading to a new camera is always daunting, controls have moved and often lots of new technology has been introduced which is not understood and mastered if you are going to get the very best out of your new camera.

I got my EOS 5D Mark III the evening before travelling to the USA for a two week photographic trip, I use lots of different cameras so normally the transition is fairly easy for me, however after unpacking and shooting a few quick images to check the new camera, I realised that this was very different to the other EOS models that I had used on a regular basis. Lots of controls had moved and the menu system was totally different, so using this new model on the trip was going to be challenging to say the least.

It's a long flight to San Francisco, and I just managed to finish reading the many hundreds of pages in the instruction as we touched down. It did explain many of the features on the camera and a few of the short cuts that make the camera easier to use are in there buried well past the first hundred pages. I have always read instruction books, most of the stuff I already know, but there is always interesting stuff in there - especially as a "teccie" who likes to know what everything does. The problem is that for many photographers they are not going to make it past those first hundred pages yet along to over 400 pages to get to the end of the book.

So for a while now I have been contemplating a series of ebooks which offer the quick way to find out the things you need without having to plough through over 400 pages and try and explain in a little more detail the benefits of some of the features. This is the first in a series and I am starting with a camera that nearly all photographers take a little time to adjust to - the EOS 5D Mark III.

I am assuming that you have already owned an EOS camera and so you already know the basic stuff such as the exposure modes and what the key terms such as apertures, shutter speeds and ISO do and how they are used and so will not be covering those areas. If not, try reading *The Essential Guide To Photography With EOS Cameras* first, before this ebook.

I am going to concentrate on the things that will be new to a lot of photographers. There will be a few things that if you have changed from one of the later models you may have come across, but it will be new to those changing from earlier models.

The 5D Mark III is a great camera and its superb range of features allow you to take images in conditions that you might not have dreamed were possible just a few years ago. So enjoy getting to know yours.

Nina





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About the EOS 5D Mark III



About the EOS 5D Mark III

The EOS 5D Mark III is much more than just a revamped version of the EOS 5D Mark II. It is a totally redesigned camera which bares very little resemblance to it's predecessor.

I have been lucky enough to have owned all three of the 5D models. The Mark I and Mark II models were developed and designed around the needs of the portrait, wedding and social photographers and so the specification of these earlier camera was biased towards high quality and the full frame ability, rather than flexibility to accommodate all types of shooting.

They were both excellent models and both enjoyed long lives in the market place. Yet, over time photographers have started to drift back towards the benefits offered by the full frame models over their smaller sensor counterparts.

The 5D Mark III was designed to be a full frame camera suitable for all areas of photography, enabling action shooting in addition to still being able to fulfil its more traditional roles for portrait and wedding shooting.

Much of the look and feel of the 5D Mark III comes from the professional 1DX model whose launch preceded this model by only a few months.

The challenge with the 5D mark III was to incorporate most of the 1DX's technology and specification into a smaller, lighter and more energy efficient camera body.

So although when you look at the two models from the outside their operation looks virtually



identical. The inside was redesigned to fit these difficult criteria as the 5D Mark III had to use the standard LP-E6 battery that most of the mid range models take, rather than the much higher capacity, but larger and heavier professional batteries. It also had to be smaller and lighter and not have the battery grip built in as is standard on the professional models.

One of the extras that the 5D Mark III has is the ability to take two capture cards, a Compact flash plus a SD card. This allows the camera to be configured to take images onto both cards at the

same time, RAW images onto one and JPEG onto the other or simply switch card automatically when one card fills up for uninterrupted shooting. This is something that previously was only found on the professional 1D series models.

Another aspect that was looked at when the EOS 5D Mark III was being designed was its resistance to the elements. The Professional models have always been well sealed, but the mid range models have been a little prone to moisture getting in. I know this well, as my original 5D died after a small leak on my

About the EOS 5D Mark III

underwater housing. It did not flood totally but had just about 2 tablespoons of water sloshing about, splashing the camera but it was enough to kill it. That is only about the same amount of water as being out for 10-15 minutes in heavy rain.

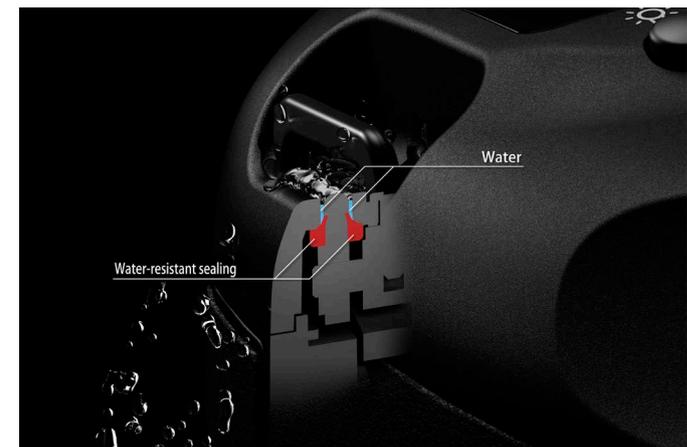
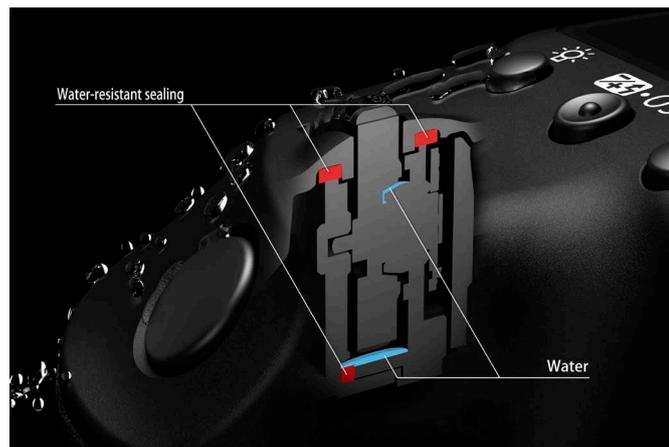
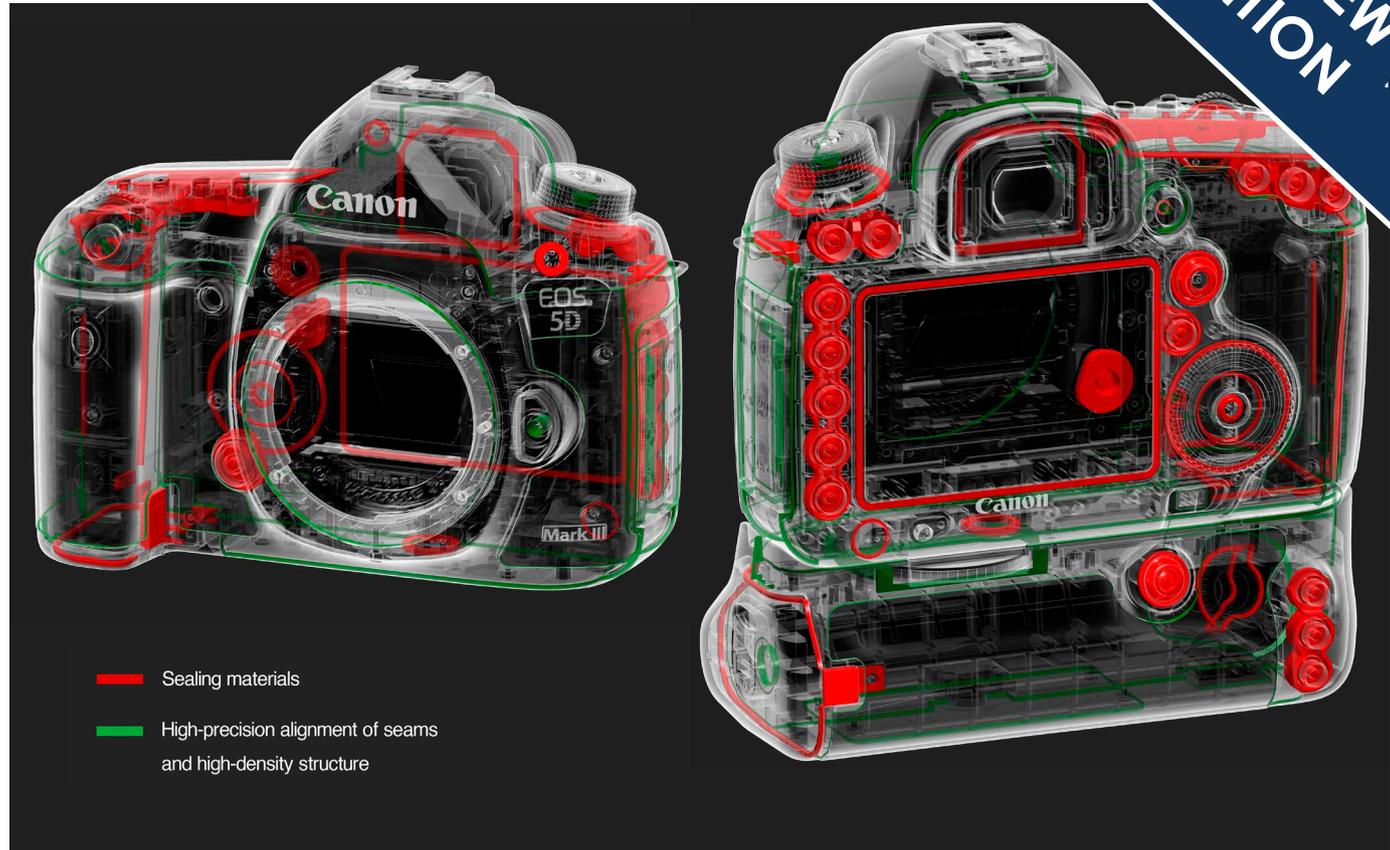
The image to the right shows the extent that Canon has gone to seal the 5D mark III against moisture and dust.

Although not waterproof the camera is now extremely well sealed about being in wet and dusty environments. I have used my 5D Mark III for 2 hours in torrential rain without experiencing any problems with it at all. I had to stop shooting in the end due to the lenses all misting up but the camera was still working fine.

Of course not all photographers are prepared to work in conditions like those. I prefer not to, but there are times when the shooting has to go ahead no matter how bad the conditions get. At those times you need a camera that can stand up to the treatment its going to get.

So the 5D Mark III is a very different model than its predecessors, built to withstand heavy professional usage, rather than the lighter demands of portrait and social photography.

There are lots of other changes. The focusing system is one of the things that has given this camera its great reputation. Allowing



About the EOS 5D Mark III

it to be configured easily for different types of action. The drive system now can work at up to 6 frames per second which is fast enough for most action. The camera has many new and innovative image processing options and of course a totally new menu system. All this and more I am going to look at later in this ebook.

However, the final thing I want to talk about in this section is a feature that can easily cause problems, which is its 100% viewfinder.

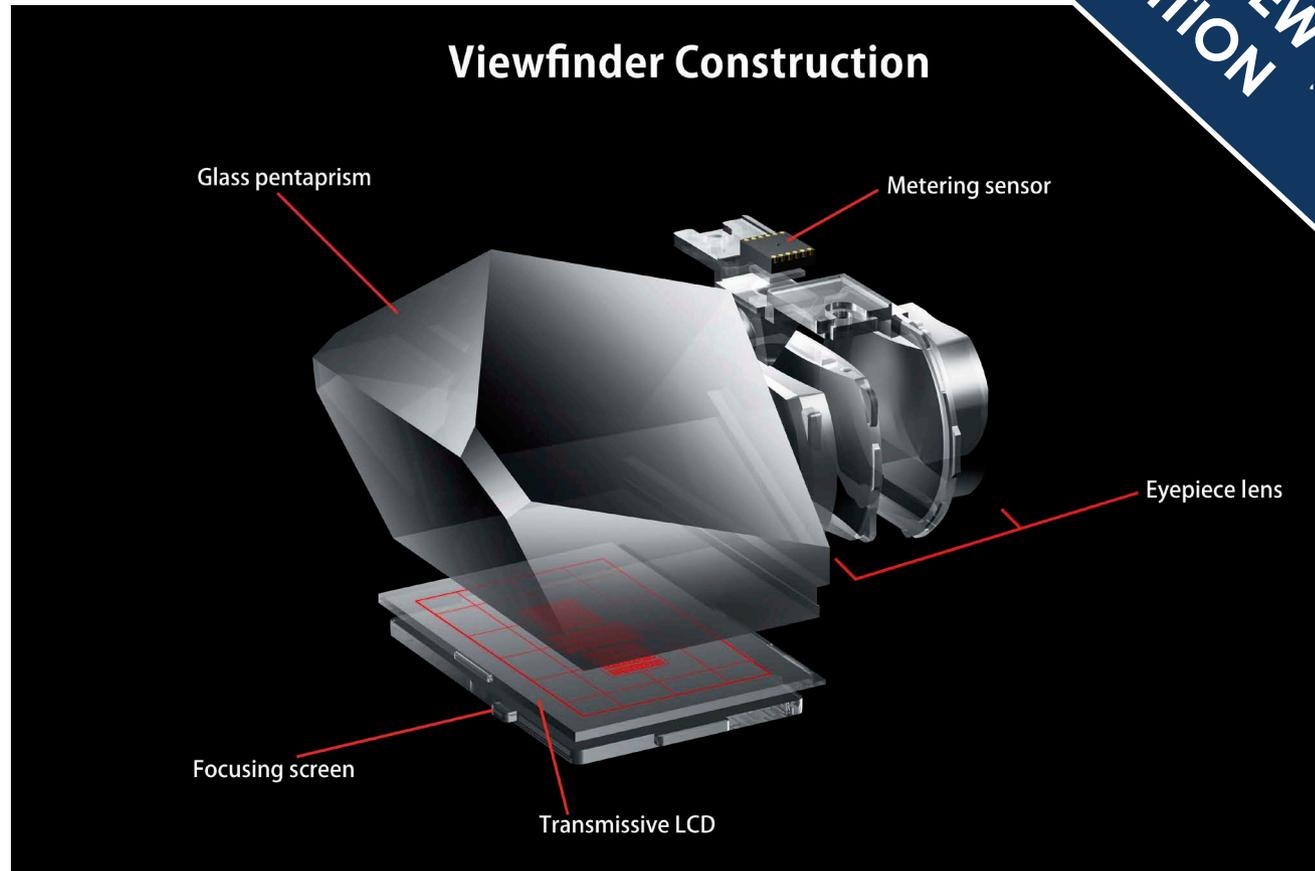
Having a viewfinder that shows you everything that is going to be captured on the imaging sensor sounds great. Indeed many photographers are surprised that only a few of the EOS models actually allow this. The other models vary from allowing you to see about 95% of the viewfinder area up to 98% on some of the other mid range models.

The main problem with seeing 100% of the area you capture is that it does encourage framing right to the very edge of the viewfinder when shooting.

This means that a very slight movement when the shutter is fired can cut small parts of the subject off.

Also when images are printed very few labs have the ability to print 100% of the area, 85% to 95% is far more common and so images that are all in the frame on a monitor have parts cut off when they are printed.

The cameras that only allow you to see 95% of



the image capture do have a small amount of “allowance” for these things that happen.

On a camera that has a 100% viewfinder, it is the photographer that has to make that allowance when framing the image rather than it automatically being there.

The photographers that will notice the difference the most will be those changing from more basic models that were sold in the period 2003-2008 as these had the smaller viewfinder areas.

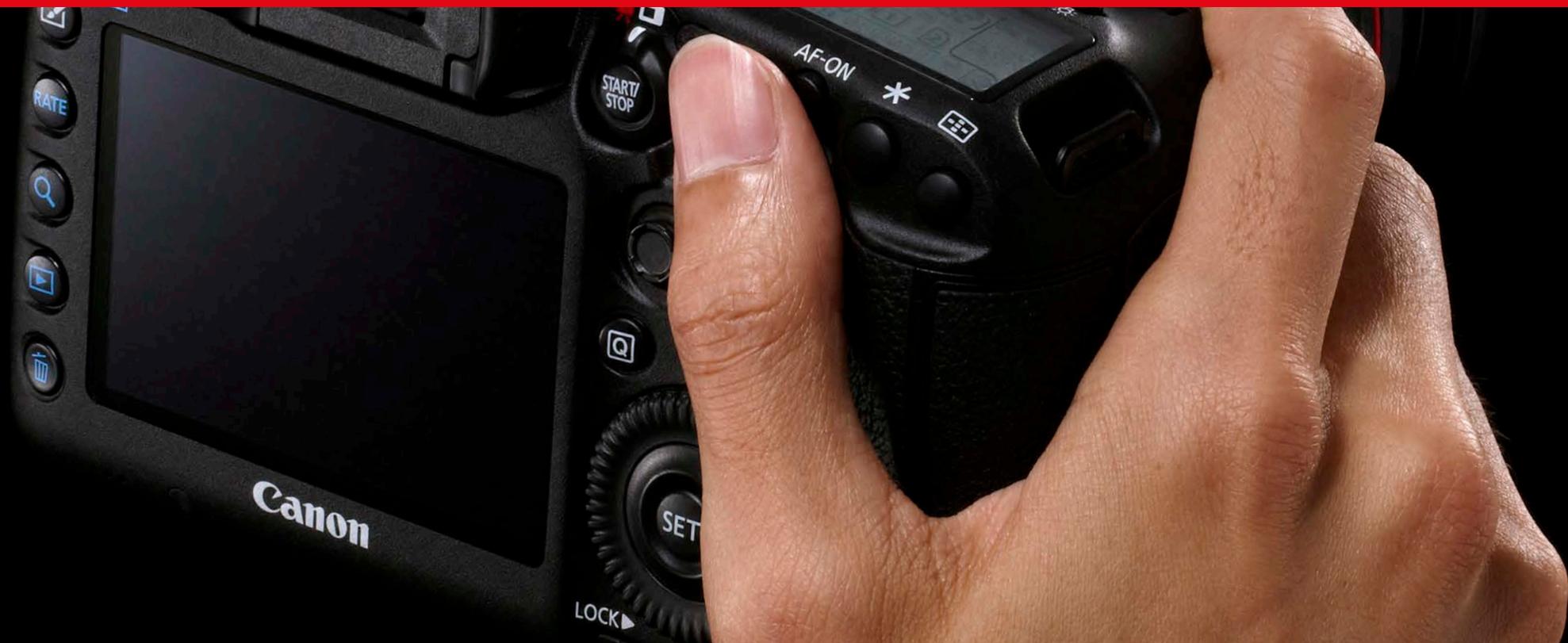
One thing that will strike you if changing from these models is how large and bright the viewfinder of the 5D Mark III actually is compared to the camera you are used to.

This is something that Canon has been working on over time to give the photographer the best possible view of the subject that they are shooting.

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Chapter 01

Layout changes



About the layout

The 5D Mark III has a similar layout to the mid range or advanced models that have been produced from about 2009. So if you have used models such as the EOS 40D, 50D, 60D and 7D it may well at a first glance look very similar to what you are used to.

If you have previously been using a more basic or introductory model such as the EOS 500D, 550D, 600D, 650D or 700D then its layout is going to be very different and it is the change from these models that is the hardest to acclimatise to.

So the model that you have used before will change how much of the camera is strange in operation to you.

The items that are outlined in red will be in either a different position or new to virtually all photographers. The items in green will be new to those that have only used the more basic models and are either in a different location or did not exist at all on the camera you have been used to using.

As you might notice that's a lot of the camera's features and functions covered by those outlines which is why in this first chapter I want to look at the basic layout and key controls that the camera has on it.

For some of these options many will be familiar with what the feature does, it's simply where it has been moved to that is different.

However, even for the familiar options such as to zoom in on a image being played back Canon has changed the place where it is operated and even the way that it is done. Even after several years of using the camera I still find one or two of the options feel strange after so many years of the old way of using them.

One thing you will find, if you still have your other camera, is that switching between this model and others can be difficult, unless that other camera is a 1DX model. Almost everything on the camera will work just that little bit different or be in a different location.



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Top plate

Mode Dial - The mode dial will have an on/off switch the side that it is on, if you have used the more basic models. However, the most noticeable difference is that many of the familiar modes will have disappeared. This is a professional model and so does not feature any of the PIC or SCN modes. There is still a Auto+ option but the Creative Auto mode and Flash off mode are both absent.

In addition to the normal P, AV, TV and M shooting modes there is a B or bulb mode, found on some cameras within the manual mode options. This allows shutter speeds of longer than 30 seconds to be used when controlled and timed manually by the photographer. It has its own setting for speed of accessing the option.

The camera also has three C modes, C1, C2, C3 which can be programmed to the photographer's specific requirements. They are designed to allow the saving of specific set ups of the camera to allow quick and easy setting for regularly shot subjects. I will look in a later chapter at their use and how to set them up, as you need to understand the camera's settings fully before they become a really useful option.

Function buttons - On this model it still uses the tradition multi function layout. The first item listed is set by using the main dial on the top of the camera and the second item listed is set using the quick control dial on the rear of the camera. Ironically the instruction book



fails to mention that little bit of logic about how they are marked.

Today these are rarely used as most photographers adapt quickly to the use of the Q buttons and the rear LCD screen to set the functions available rather than use these buttons.

It is worth noting that the ISO button is marked with a pimple on it making it easy to find and use to activate the setting of the ISO whilst looking through the viewfinder, making it the only one of the buttons I now use on a regular basis.

LCD top display - This is used when setting things using the function buttons. It is also useful as a quick check about what is set on the camera.

However, the display does not give as much information as the Q screen and is much more difficult to read.

AF-ON button - This effectively repeats the function of the shutter button to activate the focusing and metering on the camera, allowing what some photographers call back button focusing. Its been found on all mid and high level models since about 2009.

MFN or Multi Function button - This is programmed initially to allow the changing of the focusing type and also to activate the FEL or flash exposure lock. Its function can be changed within the custom controls to allow it to set other things.

Rear of camera

The rear of the camera is where all photographers are going to notice some differences regardless of the model that they are familiar with.

Live view/movie control - If this switch is in its vertical position the live view option on the camera is switched on by just pressing the central button. Pushing the button a second time will also turn the live view off.

If the switch is pushed to the left then this takes the camera into the movie shooting mode. In this mode pressing the central button starts and stops the movie recording. This is now becoming fairly standard on the mid and top end models.

Multi controller - A multi controller has been found on all the mid range models for a long time, however the 5D mark III reverts back to having a joystick type button rather than the options being incorporated within the quick control dial. If you have used the more basic models this will be a new feature. Its main use is for navigating within the menus, but it can also be used to set some of the camera's other features.

Quick control dial - This is a standard feature on the mid range EOS cameras. If you have used the introductory models previously this is used to navigate in the menus and set various functions on the camera. It often duplicates the functionality of the multi controller although at times they will set different functions.

Lock - This can be used to lock the camera's dials to prevent accidental setting of the features.



The default on the camera is for the lock to only lock the quick control dial to prevent its accidental use. However it is possible within the camera's custom function to change its function so that when locked either the multi controller or main dial can additionally be locked so that the camera settings cannot be changed by accident.

It is a good option to have, however, you need to remember that the camera has the function as when it is locked some features on the camera may not be able to be dialled in at all.

Q button - This is a button on the rear of the camera that not all photographers will be familiar with. This started to appear on models about 2010/2011 and now features on all the models in the range. Though there are still photographers who have it on their cameras that do not truly appreciate how much easier it has made the cameras use.

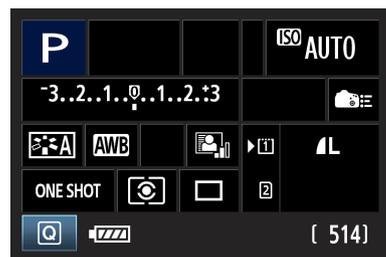
A key feature of the Q button is that it has standardised the way that all EOS models are set making it much easier to change between various models in the range.

Using the Q button to set the cameras key functions



Q screen

Q button

Quick control dial
Multi controller

The Q button allows all the main functions on the camera to be accessed from the rear LCD screen. The Q screen only appears like this if the camera is in one of the creative modes. That's P, TV, AV, M, B or C modes on the 5D Mark III. If you are in the Auto + mode the display will look slightly different as some of the things will be greyed out on their default settings and the only options that are selectable will be the drive speed, selection of cards and the file format.

When you press the Q button on the rear of the camera the screen appears with a highlighted box. As standard the display only comes up when the Q button has been pressed. However, by pressing the INFO button several times (how many depends on what it has been set to previously) it is possible to get a screen that looks the same just without the highlighted box as shown in the small image bottom left.

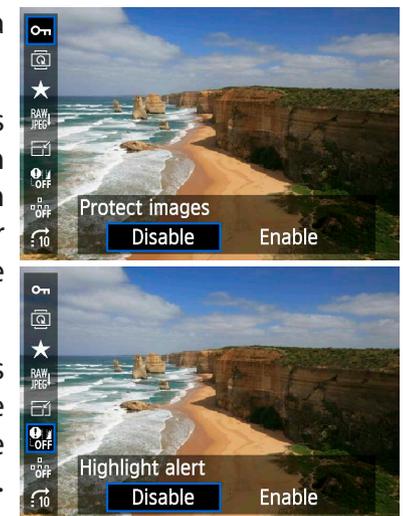
To navigate around the screen the multi controller is used. Once the item is highlighted then you set the feature using the main dial on the top or for most controls the quick control dial on the rear of the camera also works.

To see what options you have press the set button. Most options then are set using the quick control dial or the multi controller. On some features the main dial may also operate some options.

To get out of the setting screen either wait a few seconds, or touch the shutter button which will return the camera to its normal shooting operation.

On the EOS 5D Mark III, the playback functions are also available via the Q button as shown in the images to the right. When playing back an image, simply press the Q button on the rear of the camera and the menu options will be listed down the side.

Navigation through the menu items is via the multi controller and to change the settings it is the main dial on the top of the camera or the quick control dial on the rear.



Creative photo button



The first of the buttons down the left hand side when pressed will bring up a screen that allow the selection of three image processing options. The first of the icons is the picture style options. This is the part of the image processing that controls the contrast, saturation, colour tone and sharpness of the images that you are taking. As a default on the EOS 5D Mark III it is set to an automatic setting that allows the camera to choose the best option for the images that you are taking. This option can also be selected on the camera's Q screen or in the camera's menu system.

The second option along allows you to set the camera to shoot in multiple exposure mode. This allows you to take two or more exposures on the same frame to create special effects. This can also be accessed from the camera's menu.

The third option along allows you to select the camera into the HDR mode

to shoot high dynamic range images. This can also be set in the camera's menu system. Once the button is pressed the options can be accessed either the multi controller or the quick control dial. Once the mode is highlighted, pressing the set button will take you into the options menu. Once in the respective items, the selection is the same as accessing those items from the camera's menu system. So in effect this button just acts like a short cut to get to the options quicker. I am going to look at all three of these options within the image processing chapter later in this ebook.

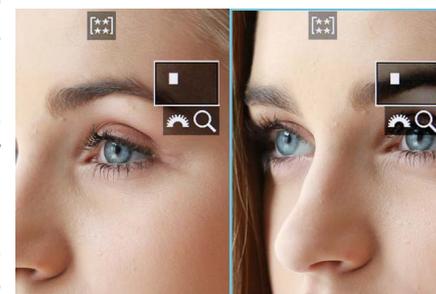
Whilst playing back images the button can also be used to bring up a comparative image display which allows two images to be viewed on the rear screen together as seen to the right.

Once the images are displayed it is possible to zoom in, rate, see the AF point, bring up a grid display and show the shooting information in various forms.

It is a feature that I personally do not use it as the best way to view and sort the images is back on the computer with a good sized monitor to view them on. However, some photographers really love this feature.

In use, pressing the set button switches between the images displayed and the quick control dial selects which image is being displayed. Pressing the Q button will set both images to the same magnification. Zooming on on the image is done by using the magnify button and then the main dial alters the magnification that is set. To return to a normal single image display you simply press the creative photo button again.

The same button is also used to print the selected image to an attached printer.



Rate button



This is another feature that I personally do not use, as it can be done far quicker using the Digital Photo Professional quick check tool once the images are on the computer.

I also have to say that for me the images fall into just two categories. Either they are good enough to keep and work up or they need to be deleted. I really do not see the point of grading them from 1 to 5 stars. However, it's also fair to say that this is a feature that some photographers really like.

To use this feature the camera needs to be playing back an image. With the image displayed that you want to rate, each time you press the rate button it goes up by 1 star, so to rate the image as 5 star you have to press the rate button 5 times.

This can also be set from the camera's playback menu, which is actually the

option that I am showing in the illustrations here, and this is because, as once you select the rate option from the menu, you press the main dial and then select the number of starts using the main dial and then press the main dial to apply the option. You can then move onto the next image you want to rate.

One of the things that you might gather from this is that it is not a quick process, which is why I think it's much easier to do this on a computer rather than in the camera.

One way that this can be used is to select images that you then want to show as a slide show. It does not really matter what rating you give the images as long as they are all the same, so they can all be 1 star, then in the slide show option, all of the 1 star images can be selected for the slide show to be shown.

There are also options within the slide show for different transitions to be used and the length of time that each image is displayed to be set.

One of the things that might be emerging already is just how many features the EOS 5D Mark III has on it. In the design process Canon consulted a huge number of photographers about what they would like to see on the camera. At times it seems as if they accommodated everyone's wish, no matter how obscure they may have been.

The reality is that no photographer is ever going to use or like all of the features on every camera, I use a lot of the camera options, yet I still only regularly use about 30% of the features offered by this exceptional camera. However, with all these options on it, you have the chance to set up a camera that truly suits how you want to work and use the camera.

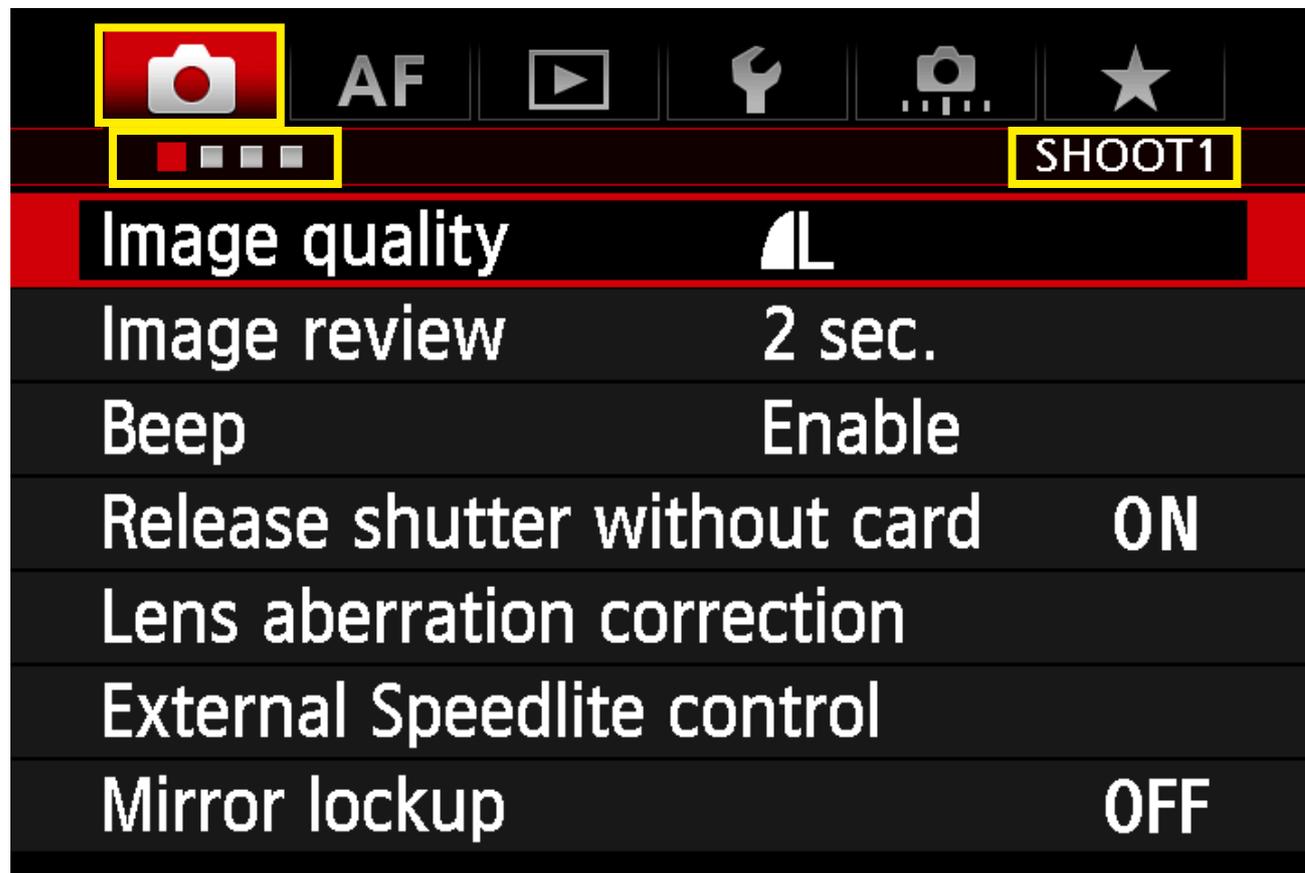


Chapter 02

The menu system



The menu - basic operation



At a first quick glance the 5D Mark III's menu system looks simple enough with just 6 main tabs or perhaps better thought of as categories along the top.

It's easy to miss the dots underneath the tab which indicate the individual menus contained within that category. If you add them all up the 5D Mark III has 21 menus when shooting still images and 22 if shooting movies.

This is the thing that takes most photographers

the longest time to get to grips with and find their way around. It also has to be said that the camera's manual is not really too helpful in learning how to use the camera's menu, rather it concentrates on how each feature is individually set.

So the first thing I am going to take a look at is the menu navigation.

The menu is split into 6 main sections or categories. Some of these are the same as we use on the other models in the range but there is one that will be

new to all photographers. The **SHOOT1** tab (it has an icon of a camera on it) or **SHOOT** menu. It's the red tab and you know the name of the shoot menu you are in by the position of the red dot under the tab and to the right of the tab. The red dot actually tells you the name of the menu. I have highlighted the bits I am talking about in yellow on the image to the left.

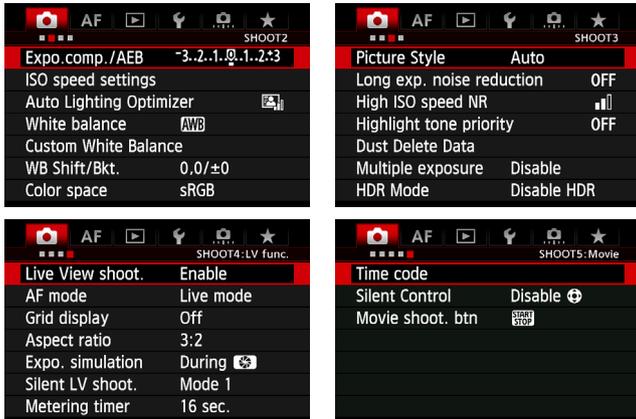
The main way to move between the main tabs or categories is pressing the Q button and that will take you along one main tab or category at a time. Strangely this is only mentioned on one page on one line in the instruction menu. Which is why most photographers will have missed it. It's on Page 52 on item 2 if you want to go and find it.

It is also possible to move between the tabs using the multi controller or the main dial, however these both go along a secondary tab at a time - so to get back to where you started that's 21 movements or clicks.

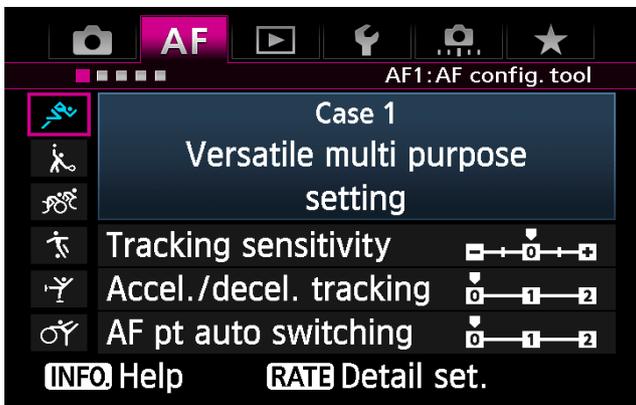
Once in the tab you want that shows the item you want to set, use the quick control dial to highlight the item you want to set and then press the set button to enter the menu. Once in the menu use the quick control dial again to select the item you want and then press the set button to apply the change. To get out of the menu system at any time simply touch the shutter button partway and the camera will go back to being ready to shoot.

As you change between the menus the items in the menu will change. They are arranged fairly logically.

The menu - basic operation

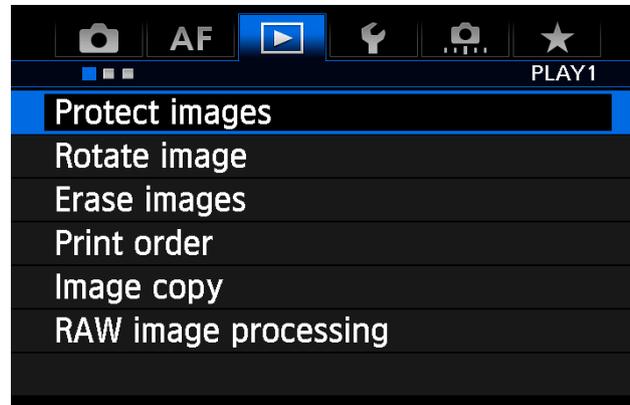


The Shoot 1 menu contains the settings that are used the most. The Shoot 2 contains the main camera override settings. The Shoot 3 menu contains mostly image processing options. The Shoot 4 menu has the live view options. If the camera is set to movies then these options change to movie options. The Shoot 5 menu is just for movies and contains the more advanced movie options.

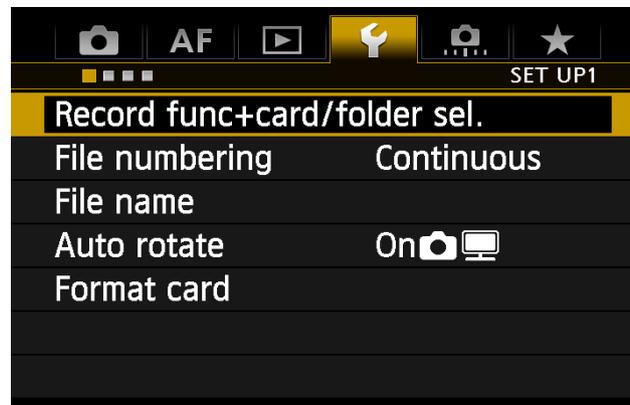


The next main tab or category contains the AF options. This is according to Canon mauve in colour, to me it looks pink. This is a new option

to this menu system and puts all of the autofocus settings options into the one place whereas on earlier models they have been found in a number of different places.

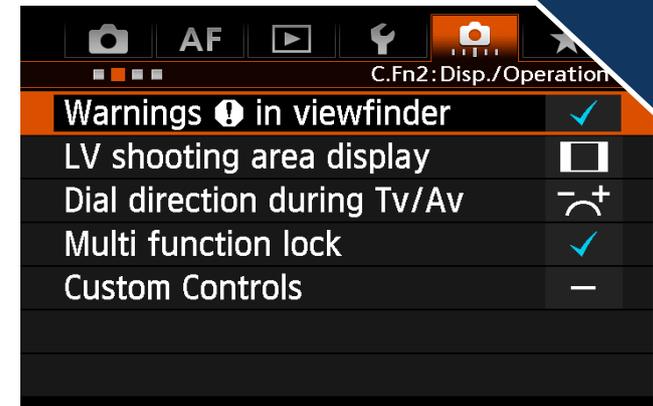


The next category along is where the playback options will be found. Most of these will be fairly familiar to most photographers as most of these options have been featured on many other models in the range.



The next menu is Yellow in colour and is the Set up menu. This often used to be called the tools menu

and contains lots of features that are used very often. Once again most of what is in this menu has been featured on many EOS



The next main tab along is orange in colour and contains the camera's Custom Function menu. This used to be one of the most complex menus on the cameras with lots of options, it is now much reduced as many of the options that used to be found in the custom functions have been moved out into the Shoot and AF menus. The functions left are now mostly about customising the cameras to accommodate individual preferences.

The final main tab is Green in colour and is a single tab and is the camera's My Menu which can be programmed in by the photographer with 6 of their most used menu items.

I am not going to explain every single menu command as most photographers who have used other EOS models will be familiar with a lot of the items in the menu system. I am however going to look at the items that may be new to at least some photographers.

The Shoot menus - Shoot 1

The first of the shoot menus contains the commands that are used the most.

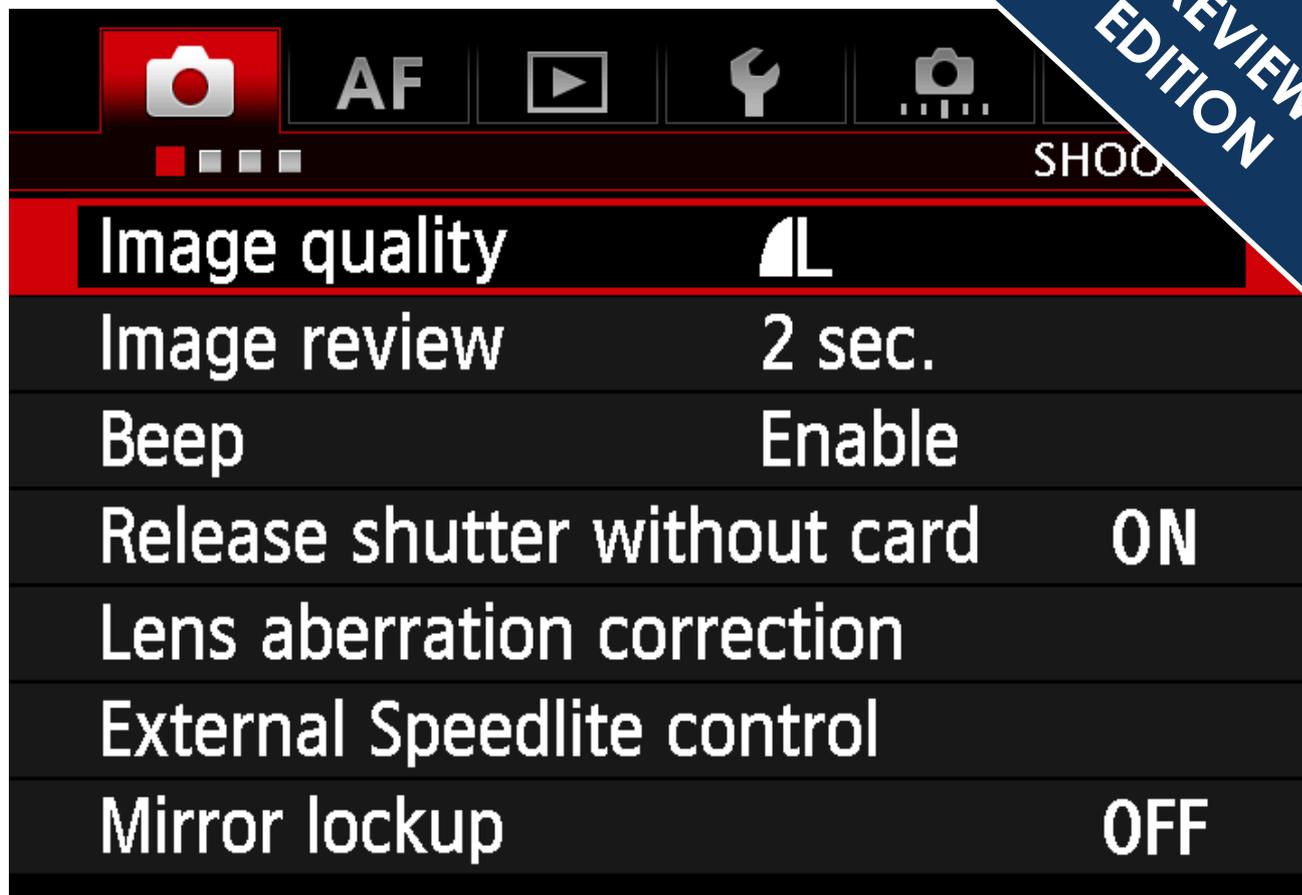
Image quality is basically the same as on any other models except there may well be a few more options to chose from compared to more basic models.

Release shutter without card replaces the older shoot without card option. It stops you taking images without a capture card fitted. By default this is set to on and so one of the jobs when setting up the camera is to turn this to off, that way if there is no card fitted the camera will refuse to shoot.

The **lens aberration correction** is a new options, those changing from later cameras may already be familiar with peripheral illumination correction which is contained in this menu along with the chromatic aberration correction option. I will look at these in more depth in the chapter about image processing.

The **external speedlite control** option has been on cameras for some years, though it has moved around within the menus from model to model. This allows a external flash to be controlled from the cameras menu. The flash needs to be a 600EX-RT, 580EX II, 430EX II, 270EX II, 320EX, MR 14 EX II or a flash launched after 2012 to be compatible with this system. This option allows a lot of the wireless flash options be set up on the camera, though the flash itself will still need to be told if it is to function as a master or slave unit.

It does offer a clear option which is not on many



of the flash units, but some of the options will be easier to set on the flash rather than this menu.

The **Mirror lockup** option is now in the main camera menu rather than being hidden in the custom function menu on the earlier models. This is used to prevent vibration being caused by the mirror's action. As the camera's action is very smooth, this is seldom used but may be needed if shooting through ultra long telephoto lenses, telescopes or very high magnification macro work. The downside to this is that with

the mirror locked up you cannot see through the camera's viewfinder.

When this option is set to enable, the shutter button has to be pressed fully down and then fully released for the mirror to be raised. The shutter button is then fully pressed again to take the image. If the picture is not taken within 30 seconds, the mirror will be returned to its normal position to prevent damage to the imaging sensor. The options that can be set are simply OFF or On.

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