

Upgrading to the EOS 7D Mark II

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

The built in GPS

Plus much more besides



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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. The 7D Mark II is certainly no exception to this, even if you own a EOS 7D, its going to be a steep learning curve to get to grips with this fantastic new model from Canon.

The 7D Mark II has got more in common with the professional models in the Canon range, sharing the same menu system and having all the features expected on a professional model, yet it is still an affordable model and so many enthusiasts will also be drawn to it for its superb focusing performance.

The camera also features the 1.6x crop sensor, sometimes also called the APS-C format, this also makes it popular in the sports, action and wildlife markets where the crop factor given by the sensor is of great benefit, making lenses more able to fill the frame, and thus avoiding the costly ultra telephoto range. The camera takes both the standard EF range of lenses but is also compatible with the smaller and lighter EF-S series which gives photographers a range of 80 compatible lenses to choose from.

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 I 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 7D Mark II 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 7D Mark II



About the EOS 7D Mark II



The EOS 7D Mark II is much more than just a revamped version of the EOS 7D. It is a totally redesigned camera which bears very little resemblance to its predecessor.

I have been lucky enough to have owned both of the 7D models. They were both developed to offer ground breaking focusing performance at a very affordable price point. Many of the features on the 7D Mark II have originated on the professional 1 and 5 series models in the range.

The 7D Mark II was designed to be a camera aimed at the action, sports and wildlife markets, where the need for fast shooting rates and stunningly quick focusing, outweigh the advantages of the

full frame models.

The challenge with the 7D Mark II was to incorporate most of professional focusing technology and specification into a smaller, lighter and more cost effective camera body.

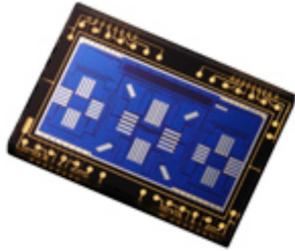
One of the extras that the 7D Mark II has, is the ability to take two capture cards, a Compact flash plus a SD card. This allows the camera to be configured to take images onto both cards at the same time, RAW images onto one and JPEG onto the other or simply switch card automatically when one card fills up for uninterrupted shooting. This is something that previously was only found on the professional models.

Another aspect that was looked at when the EOS 7D Mark II 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.

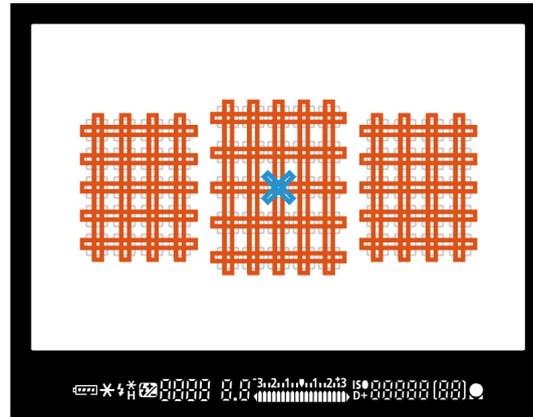
The image above shows the extent that Canon has gone to seal the 7D Mark II against moisture and dust, taking the sealing up to the same standards which we have already seen on models such as the EOS 5D Mark III

Although not waterproof the camera is now extremely well sealed against being in wet and dusty environments. I have used my cameras

About the EOS 7D Mark II



-  f/2.8 cross-type points
-  f/5.6 horizontal line detection line sensor
-  f/5.6 vertical line detection line sensor



for up to 2 hours in torrential rain without experiencing any problems with them. 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.

There are lots of other changes. The focusing system is one of the things that has given this camera its great reputation, allowing it to be configured easily for different types of action. I will look at this in depth later as it does offer stunning performance and is ideally configured for the amateur photographer.

The drive system now can work at up to 10 frames per second which is fast enough for most action. Another unusual feature for a camera at

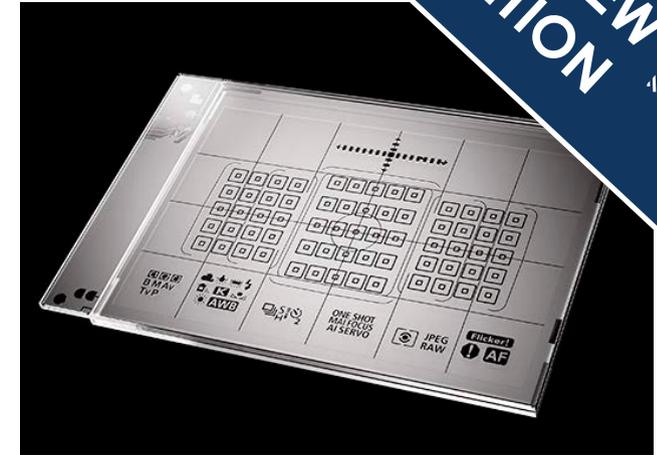
this level is the ability to set the shooting speed to your own requirement of between 2 and 10 frames per second.

The camera has many new and innovative image processing options and of course a totally new menu system. I am going to look at all this and more 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.

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 viewfinder also has a lot more viewfinder information than any other EOS camera, which will take a bit of getting use to when you first start using it.

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 earlier models is how large and bright the viewfinder of the 7D Mark II actually is compared to the camera you are used to.

Of course the camera has also had lots of innovative features added such as the built in GPS which will make the camera appeal to an even wider group of photographers.

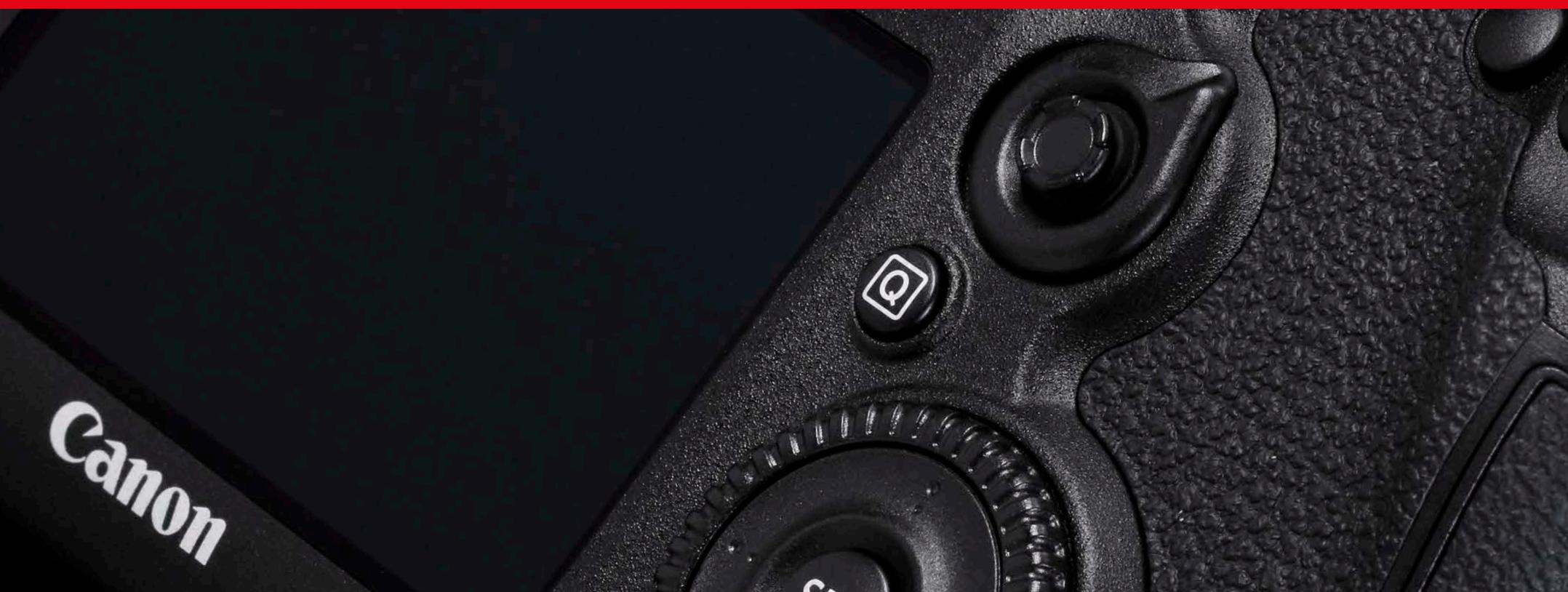
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Chapter 01

Layout changes



Canon

About the layout

The 7D Mark II 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 an image being played back Canon has changed the place where it is operated and even the way that it is done. Even after using the camera a lot, 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 or a 5D Mark III model. Almost everything on the camera will work just that little bit different or be in a different location.



Top plate

Mode Dial - The mode dial now has a push button in the middle to prevent it moving accidentally. This needs depressing before the mode dial can be turned. However, the most noticeable difference is that many of the familiar modes will have disappeared. This is a high end 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 traditional 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.

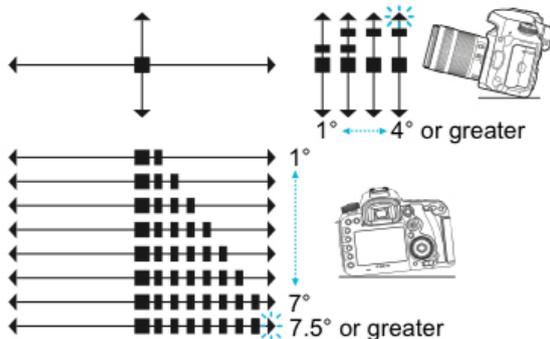
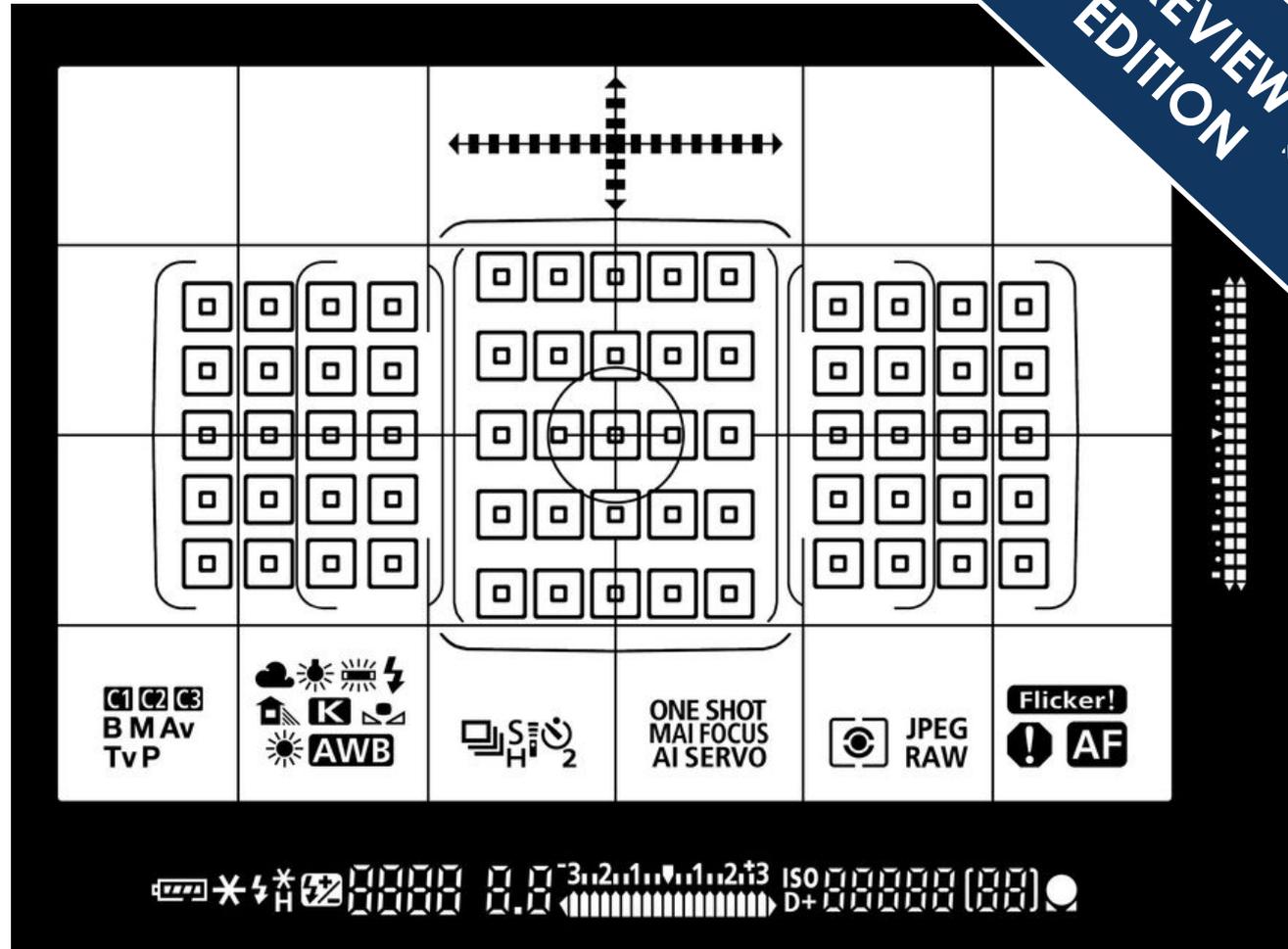
MFN or Multi Function button - This is programmed initially to allow the changing of the focusing type and also to activate the FEL or flash exposure lock. Its function can be changed within the custom controls to allow it to set other things.

Viewfinder changes

Over the past few years we have seen the gradual introduction of additional information in the camera's viewfinder. The EOS 7D Mark II takes this to a new level, with information about the mode, white balance, drive settings, focusing mode, file format and even features like its flicker reduction. The illustration to the right shows everything that can be shown. However, the viewfinder will not show all of the settings at the same time.

This information is in addition to the normal information displayed at the bottom of the viewfinder. There are options within the extensive menu system on the camera to allow you to enable or disable many of these options. I will look at these on the next page.

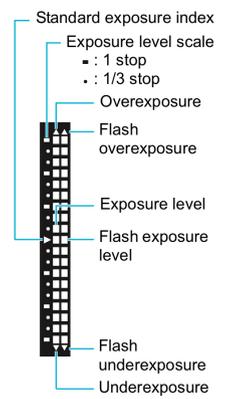
A nice addition to the camera is the viewfinder level displayed at the top of the viewfinder. The original EOS 7D did have a viewfinder level but it was complex to use and most photographers simply did not use it. The new level comprises of two scales, which increase in length according to how unevenly the camera is being held. The diagram below shows the principle of how this works. This is actually a big improvement



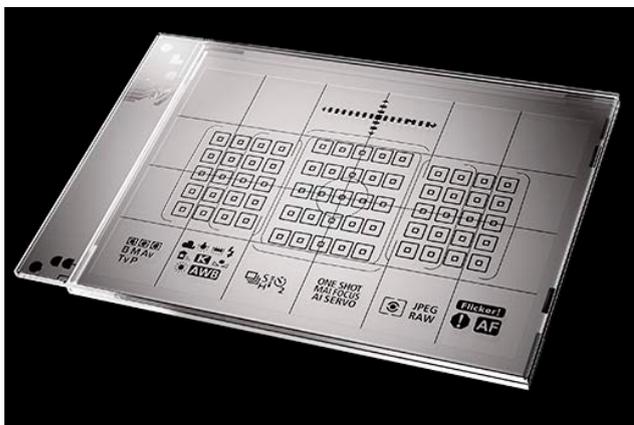
over the old system and actually is going to prove useful to the majority of photographers.

There is also the addition of an exposure scale down the right-hand side of the camera's viewfinder. This is a feature that has been seen on the professional 1D series models for sometime now. However, this is the first model in the consumer market feature it.

The left-hand scale of the two indicates the standard daylight or ambient exposure and the right-hand scale depicts any flash exposure in comparison to it when flash is being used.



Viewfinder information



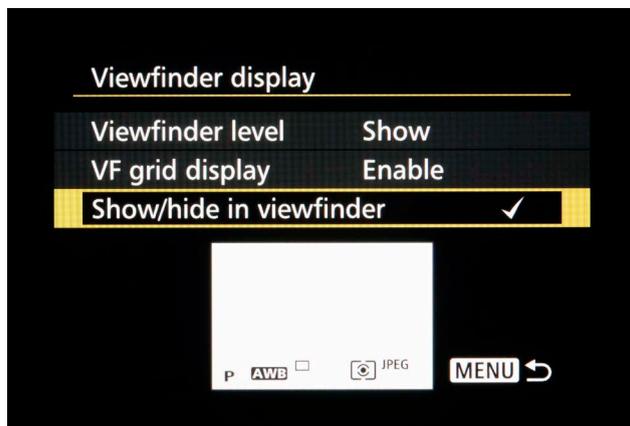
Although many photographers will love the new information displays in the viewfinder, there are others that will also find it highly distracting.

Therefore Canon has given photographers the option to choose what is displayed within the camera's viewfinder. These options are found in the setup menu on the second of the main tabs in a command called viewfinder display.

When you enter this command there are a number of things that you can choose to turn on or off in the viewfinder. There are options for the viewfinder level and the viewfinder grid display both of which I'm going to look at on the next page and an option for show or hide in the viewfinder which is where these options are found.

When you go into this menu there are tick boxes available for the mode, white balance, drive, AF, metering, quality and flicker detection. Only the flicker detection option is turned on standard.

In theory the benefit of having this information displayed, is to remind the photographer of the

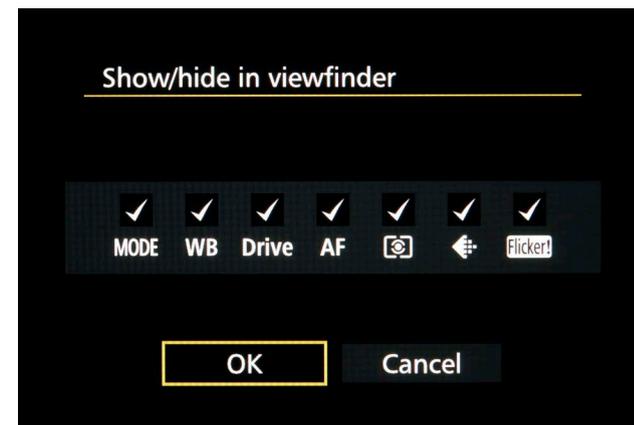


functions they currently have set, thus reminding them of the functions that need to be changed to get a good picture.

This works for those photographers who actually do read the viewfinder information. I know from experience of training many photographers, that there is a group of photographers out there that don't even read the essential information such as shutter speed, aperture and ISO and are therefore not likely to read this additional information either.

The idea behind this function, is to allow the photographer to set more of the camera overrides without having to remove the camera away from their eye.

Interestingly, even if this information is not switched on to display, if the white balance, metering, drive, or AF buttons on the top of the camera's pressed then the information will automatically appear in the viewfinder, to allow the setting of the function.



The focusing information will also display if the AF/MF switch on the lens is moved, or even on lenses with electronic focusing as in the list below, if the focusing ring is turned and therefore the lens has been placed onto manual focus.

EF50mm f/1.0L USM
EF85mm f/1.2L USM
EF85mm f/1.2L II USM
EF200mm f/1.8L USM
EF300mm f/2.8L USM

EF400mm f/2.8L USM
EF400mm f/2.8L II USM
EF500mm f/4.5L USM
EF600mm f/4L USM
EF1200mm f/5.6L USM
EF28-80mm f/2.8-4L USM
EF40mm f/2.8 STM
EF-S10-18mm f/4.5-6.3 IS STM

Viewfinder grid

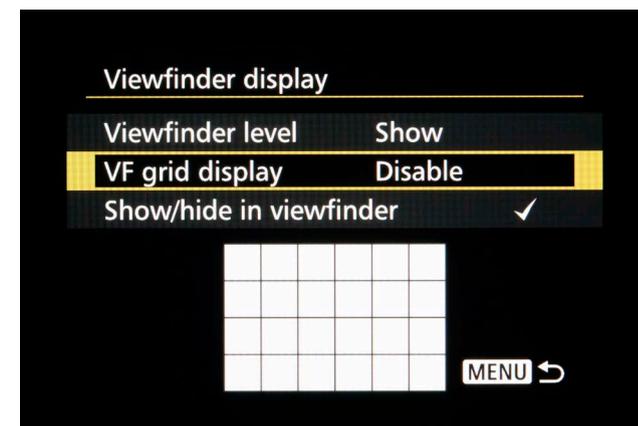
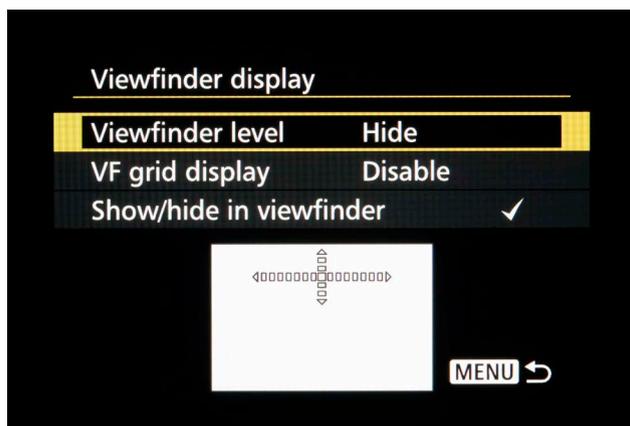
This camera has the ability to display a grid in viewfinder. The grid in the viewfinder is turned on from the second of the setup menus. The viewfinder grid is always a 6 x 4 grid. This has been on a number of models but photographers seem to get very confused between this option and the live view options.

There is now a new option within the setup menu called viewfinder display, which we have just looked at for the viewfinder information. When you are in this menu there are three options provided.

The first is for the viewfinder level to be turned on or off. The second is for the viewfinder grid display to be either disabled or enabled. These are both illustrated at bottom and the main image shows what the viewfinder grid will look like.

There is also an option on the camera to display the viewfinder level and viewfinder grid display on the LCD panel on the rear of the camera when live view is being used.

The option to turn this on and off is found within the live view settings in the shoot part of the menus. There are options within the live view to have a 3 x 3 grid effectively splitting the viewfinder according to the rule of thirds. There is an option for the same 6 x 4 grid that is used in viewfinder and also display with diagonal lines marked as well. It is important to remember that these are two totally separate displays and therefore are set in very different places.



INFO display on menu screens

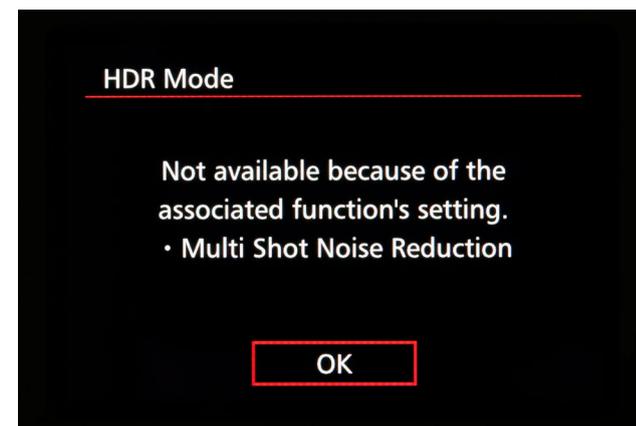
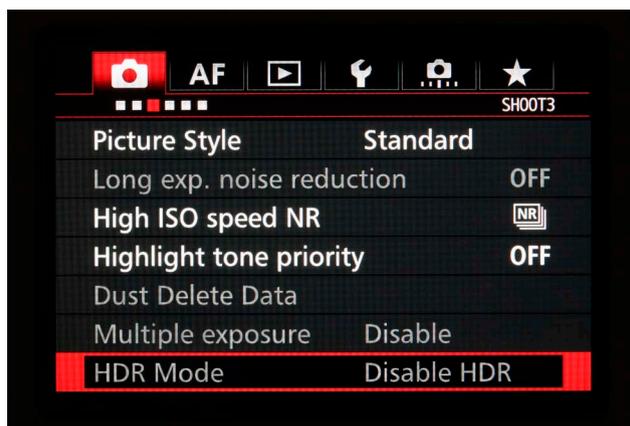
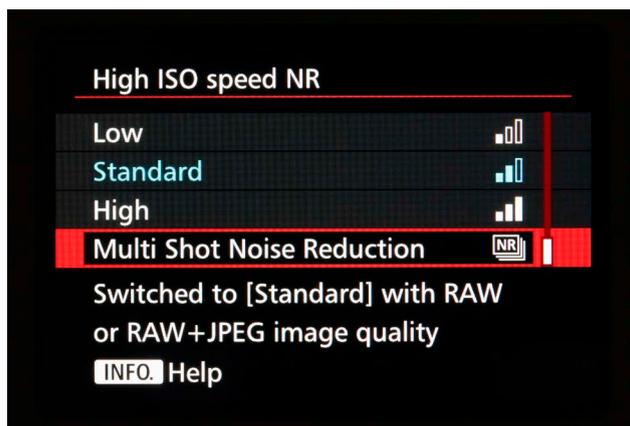
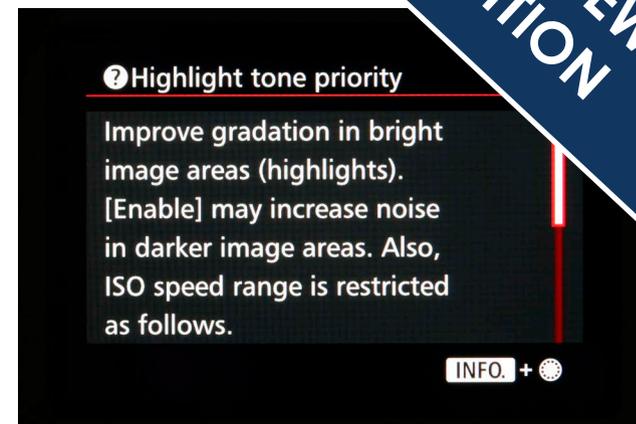
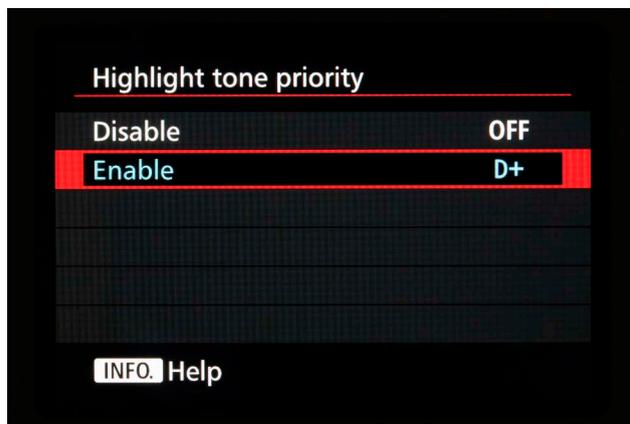
As time goes by the cameras are becoming increasingly complex. On the all the basic models, this is been overcome to a degree by something called a feature guide. Every time you go to a feature that you may need to understand what it does, the camera will display information about it. Although in principle a good idea, it is something that for most experienced photographers, quickly becomes irritating and therefore gets turned off. Therefore in the more advanced models there is a slightly more sophisticated system that has been introduced.

On many of the features that set within the menus, there is now a display at the bottom that says INFO and then the word help by it. When this is showing, pressing the info button on the camera will bring up a detailed description of what the function does how it is used.

Some of the descriptions are quite long and therefore once in this setting you often see the word INFO plus an image of the quick control dial. When this is showing, whilst still holding down the info button, turning the quick controlled on the rear of the camera will allow you to scroll down the description.

This works well, as now the information is only shown when you want it to come up and therefore does not get in the way and can be left on at all times.

If items are greyed out try pressing the set button whilst they are selected as this may will bring up the probable cause for not being able to set them.



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 7D Mark II 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.

AF area selection lever - this is used to select the focusing type once the focusing point selection button has been pushed. Each time the lever is pushed to the right it will move to the next AF type.

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.

Touch pad - This is used to control the camera silently when shooting movies

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

Live view/movie control

Multi controller and AF Area selection lever

Q button

Touch pad

Quick control dial

Lock

camera settings cannot be changed by accident.

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 camera's key functions



Q screen

Q button

Multi controller

Quick control dial

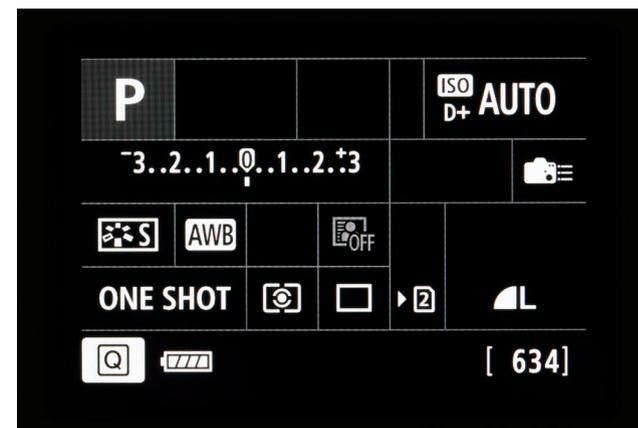
The Q button allows all the main functions on the camera to be accessed from the rear LCD screen. The Q screen only appears like this if the camera is in one of the creative modes. That's P, TV, AV, M, B or C modes on the camera. If you are in the Auto + mode the display will look slightly different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

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 are then 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.



Using the Q button to set playback functions

The EOS 7D Mark II has the ability to allow many of its playback functions to be set directly from the LCD screen on the rear of the camera by using the Q button.

When you are playing back an image, press the Q button on the rear of the camera and you will bring up display as illustrated to the right.

Once this display appears, to navigate through the options you simply use the multi controller on the rear of the camera to highlight the item that you wish to set.

To change your options you simply turn the quick control dial on the rear of the camera to set the options which will be displayed along the bottom of the display.

The options that can be controlled from the screen always follows the same order:

Protect images - This allows an image to be protected so it cannot be in erased by accident. However, if the card is formatted the image will still be lost.

Rotate image - This allows an image to be rotated to be in the correct orientation.

Rating - This allows an image to be rated between one and five stars, This function can also be achieved by using the rate button on the rear of the camera.

RAW image processing - This allows images which are as RAW format on the card on the camera to be converted into a JPEG file and

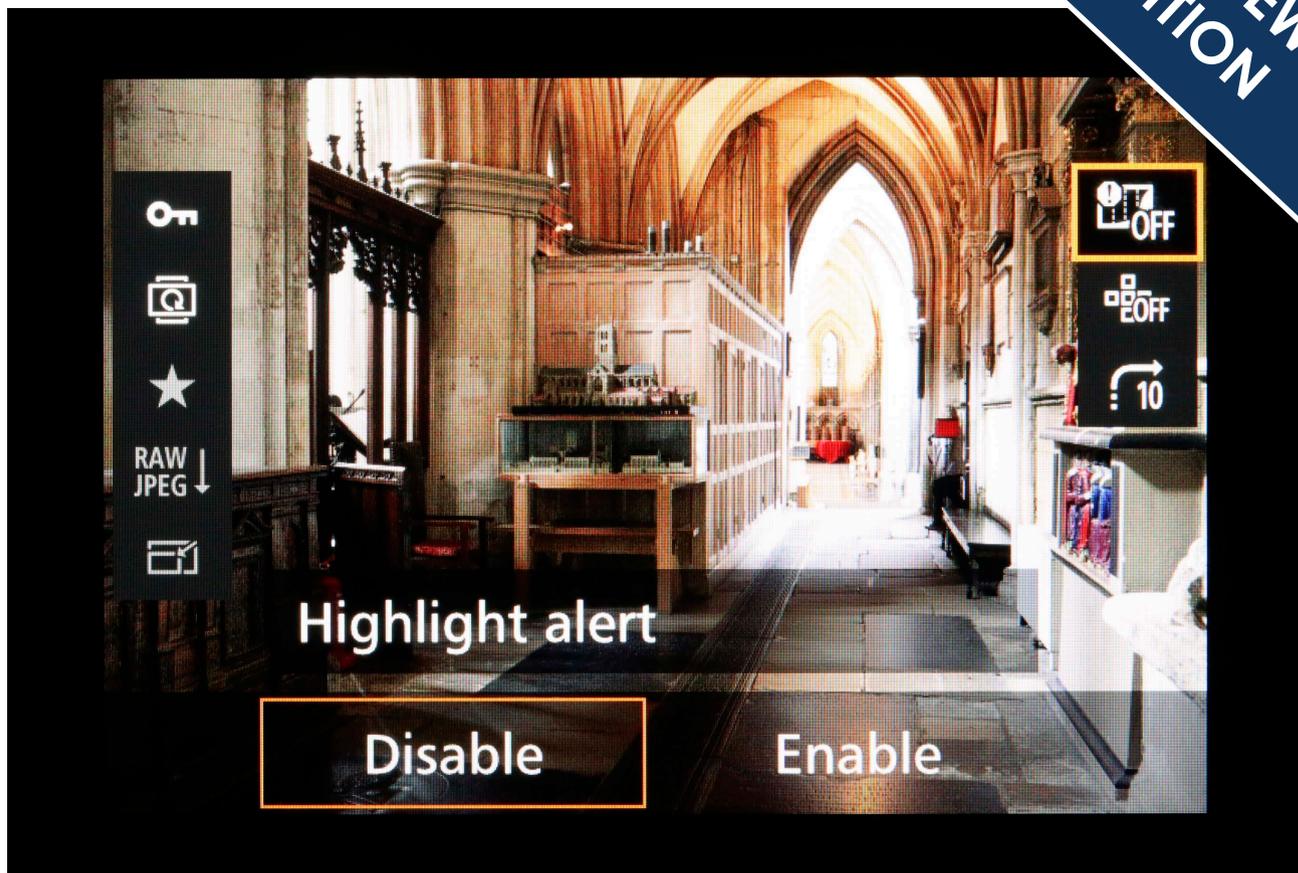


image processing to be applied. I will look at this in more detail in the image processing chapter.

Resize - This allows the size of the JPEG image to be made smaller.

Highlight alert - This allows a highlight alert function to be turned on or off without the need to go into the playback menu.

AF point display - This allows the ability to display the AF points and where they were, to

be turned on or off without the need to go into the playback menu.

Image jump - This allows the options for the image jump using the main dial on the top of the camera to be set up without entering the playback menu.

If the camera is set to shoot movies, not all of these functions will be available.

Creative photo button



The first of the buttons down the left hand side (highlighted in red above) 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 7D Mark II 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 selection. 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.

When the twin image display is 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 in 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 photographer 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 done once you select the rate option from the menu, you press the rate button then select the number of stars using the main dial and then press the rate button the option. You can then move onto the next image you want to rate.

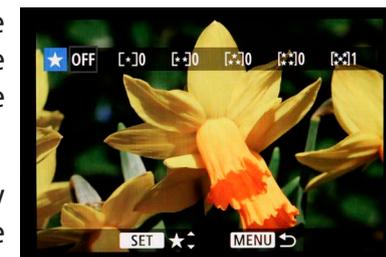
One of the things that you might gather from this is that it is not a quick process, which is why I think it's much easier to do this on a computer rather than in the camera.

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 7D Mark II 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.



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