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## The Sigma 85mm F1.4 EX DG HSM is World Class Glass

Since its announcement last year, the **Sigma 85mm F1.4 EX DG HSM** has been generating tons of buzz in photography circles for its flat-out fantastic performance.

The Hypersonic Motor in the Sigma 85mm F1.4 autofocuses amazingly swiftly. The build quality is rock-solid.

And the exceptional optical performance of this lens is making huge waves both via word of mouth from photographer to photographer in forums, blogs and Twitter streams, and also in lens testing labs around the world.



### Sigma 85mm F1.4 EX DG HSM

We at Sigma know this lens is tack-sharp. And we know this lens is a world-class tool for serious photographers for portraiture, product, fashion, indoor sports, documentary work and any of a myriad of other photographic specialties where a winning combination of reach, light-gathering, Autofocus speed and accuracy and optical performance demand professional performance.

But it isn't just us talking about what make the Sigma 85mm F1.4 EX DG HSM lens so extraordinary.

Popular Photography Magazine awarded a prestigious **2011 Pop Award** to this lens, who said: "in our test shootout of four top-notch 85mm f/1.4s last spring, this Sigma entry edged the other competitors by a hair in SQF and was also the least expensive by far."

And check out these test results for the Sigma 85mm F1.4 from the **DXOMark** in comparison to just some of its competitors. This lens is a winner, any way you slice it!

The Sigma 85mm EX DG HSM is a full-frame lens, so it is compatible with 35mm film SLRs and full-frame and APS-C DSLRs. On the Sigma SD1 with a 1.6x sensor factor we paired the 85mm EX DG HSM for this blog piece, this lens's field of view is comparable to a 135mm lens on a full-frame camera. In either case, it is flat-out fantastic.



Here's a simple self-portrait to show the sharpness of the Sigma 85mm F1.4 EX DG HSM in a studio setting paired with the Sigma SD1. It's lit with one big softbox to the top left of frame, along with a big white bounce card low right for some shadow-side fill. 1/100 F7.1 ISO 100. We'll zoom in to 100% pixels on my eyes, and on the textures of the jacket, shirt, and tie, to check out the total sharpness next.

This lens feels great in the hands, and it is one of those lenses that will instantly feel like an old friend. It's got good weight, and a nice wide focus ring grip for when you choose to manual-focus. A really cool touch is that when the 85mm F1.4 is paired with an APS-C camera, a dedicated lens hood adapter can lengthen the barrel along with mounting the petal hood. This does two things—first, this allows for different hand positionings, and secondly, it further helps to block extraneous light.

You see, when a full-frame lens is mounted on an APS-C camera, the total image circle of the lens is quite a bit bigger than what you're seeing through the viewfinder. So, there is a good bit more visual information being gathered by the lens than what winds up on the APS-C sensor. And the things that are out of viewfinder sight (and therefore not in the final composition of the frame), are oftentimes out of mind of even the most \_\_\_\_\_ (practical, thoughtful, smart,) photographer. But if that thing that's out of viewfinder but still in the image circle is a reflective surface or a light source, it can lead to errant and unnecessary light rays entering the lens and bouncing around during image capture which may impact the final image.

For example, there is big lightbox that is just outside the frame to the left of the self-portrait a few paragraphs up made with the APS-C sensor size Sigma SD1 SLR. Were I shooting this with the Sigma 85mm F1.4 EX DG HSM on a full-frame camera like the Canon EOS 5D, I'd look through the viewfinder, and see that this big light source was actually intruding into my frame. But here, it is outside the sensor frame, but still in the overall image circle. By putting the APS-C lens hood adapter on the 85mm F1.4, I'm helping to block that unwanted stray light that's in the image circle from bouncing around. (Makes great sense, right?)



I processed the X3F Raw image through Sigma Photo Pro as a 16-bit TIFF and did some minor final tweaks in Adobe Camera Raw. Here is a 100% pixel view of my eyes from the 16-bit Tiff, saved for web as a highest quality JPEG. Click on the image to have it fly out to fullscreen 1:1 pixel view. Notice how sharp the details are in this image slice—the reflections of eyelashes and softbox on the eyes, for example. And the F7.1 aperture gives enough depth of field to keep both eyes perfectly in focus.



Again, here's a 100% pixel view of the stitching of my sports coat, shirt and tie. Notice how the combination of the Sigma SD1 and the 85mm F1.4 EX DG HSM capture every single stitch and thread in the zone of sharp focus? Remember, this isn't a macro shot—it is easily seven or eight feet from the lens to the subject—and it's still perfectly picking up all that super-fine detail. (And of course, since this is made with the Sigma SD1 and its Foveon sensor, there's no moiré whatsoever!) Click on the image to view fullscreen at 1:1 pixel view.

Search the web for editorial reviews, tests from reputable photographers with blogs, and consumer ratings on popular retail sites, of the Sigma 85mm F1.4 EX DG HSM.

What you'll find is that this lens is the real deal: It combines amazing optical performance, and super-fast autofocus in a pro-quality build. Throw in a great street price in comparison to its closest competitors, and the deal gets even sweeter.

Check out this [blog posting](#) from Sigma Pro Lindsay Adler about the Sigma 85mm F1.4 EX DG HSM!

And check out this [guest pro blog](#) featuring nothing but Sigma 85mm F1.4 EX DG HSM model shots from guest photographer Robert Lopshire!

And see what Sigma Pro Kevin Ames has to say about the [Sigma 85mm F1.4 EX DG HSM](#)