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POP AWARDS 2008 OUR FAVORITE GEAR

You can keep your raindrops and roses and whiskers on kittens. Our favorite things all belong in our camera bag or at home in our digital darkroom. Our editors scrutinize hundreds, if not thousands, of cameras, lenses, printers, scanners, image-editing programs, and other gear for photographers every year. But of all of the terrific items we considered, this year we chose just 28 for our annual POP Awards for Photography's Outstanding Products. Want the details on just what makes each of these products so special? Find out in our Buyer's Guide 2009, exclusively on newsstands from November 25, 2008, through February 23, 2009. You can also check out the POP Awards online at www.PopPhoto.com.

Adobe Photoshop Elements 7.0

This Windows-only upgrade (\$95, street) is super-powerful and easier than ever.

Alien Skin Exposure 2

Digitally replicates many b&w and color films (\$230, street).

Canon EOS Rebel XSi

Winner of our August 2008 midlevel DSLR shootout, this is a steal (\$627, street, body only).

Canon VIXIA HF11

This flash-memory-based camcorder (\$1,200, street) makes 12X optical zoom and 1920x1080-pixel HD video palm-sized.

Casio Exilim Pro EX-F1

An EVF camera (\$950, street) that shoots both HD video and 60-fps stills.

Cullmann 4305 Universal Tripod Macro

The center column splits to get you almost to ground level (\$165, street).

Dynamic Photo HDR

MediaChance's powerful, affordable (\$55, direct) path to high-dynamic-range imaging.

Elinchrom EL-Skyport RX Radio Slave

Wirelessly fire studio strobes using hot-shoe transmitters and receivers (\$260, street) that plug into strobes.

Epson Stylus Photo R1900

Great color accuracy in prints up to 13x19 inches—even 44-inch panoramas (\$500, street). Long-life ink? Yes!

Eye-Fi Explore

This 2GB card (\$130, street) sends images to your computer, connects to hotspots, and even geotags.

Fujifilm FinePix S100FS

Get 14.3X zoom, 11.1MP, lens-based image stabilization, and "film simulation" (\$700, street).

HP Photosmart Pro B8850

This \$500 (street) 13-inch printer has 3 gray inks for amazing b&w.

Kodak EasyShare EX811

A digital photo frame (\$170, street) with Wi-Fi, wide viewing angle, and crisp resolution.

Lensbaby Composer

Newest selective-focus lens (\$270, street) trades wobbly pins for a ball socket.

Microtek ArtixScan M1

Digitize your archive with this unique, flatbed/film scanner (\$520, street).

Nikon D3

Full-frame 12.1MP has ISOs to 25,600. The price? \$4,515, street (body only).

Nikon SB-900 Speedlight

It lets you shape flash output and tells the camera which white balance to set (\$450, street).

Olympus E-420

At 5.1x3.6x2.1 inches, this 10MP DSLR fits in a pocket (\$440, street, body only).

Panasonic Lumix DMC-FX500

From a 3-inch LCD touchscreen to a 5X zoom—for just \$320 (street).

Pentax SMCP-DA* 200mm f/2.8ED (IF) SDM AF

A fast, sharp, falloff-free, digital-only, pro-caliber, prime telephoto lens (\$750, street).

Ricoh GR Digital II

A modern classic (\$547, street) with 10MP and a fast, 28mm-equivalent f/2.4 lens.

Samsung NV24HD

This 10.2MP compact (\$275, street) packs a wide zoom (24–86.5mm equivalent) and a 2.5-inch OLED.

Sigma 120–400mm f/4.5–5.6 DG OS HSM

Image stabilization comes to a lens that's sharp and distortion-free (\$850, street).

Sigma DP1

Full-sized DSLR sensor in a compact body with a 28mm-equivalent f/4 lens (\$700, street).

Sony Alpha 350

A \$700 (street, body only) 14.2MP DSLR with a tilting 2.7-inch LCD, plus the smoothest live view yet.

Tamron 28–300mm f/3.5–6.3 XR Di VC AF

This 10.7X lens (43–465mm equivalent) is Tamron's first stabilized one (\$600, street).

Tokina 11–16mm f/2.8 AT-X 116 Pro DX

A digital-only 16.5–24mm equivalent that's fast, well-priced (\$570, street), and optically impressive.

Westcott Strobelite Plus 2 kit

Studio strobes with prosumer and beginner features (\$760, street). ☺