

Nikkor AF 10.5mm f/2.8G ED DX Fisheye - Review / Test Report

Lens Reviews - Nikon / Nikkor (APS-C)

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Special thanks to Dr. Thomas Rubach for providing this lens for testing!

Introduction

Classic full format 15mm fisheye lenses provide a rather disappointing field-of-view (~120 degrees) when used on APS-C DSLRs. As of today the Nikon DSLR system is APS-C centric and consequently Nikon released a new fisheye dedicated to this format - the Nikkor AF 10.5mm f/2.8G ED DX Fisheye. The Nikkor provides the typical 180 degrees (diagonal) field-of-view.

Traditionally fisheyes are often used for aerial-, underwater- and some kind of indoor photography. Due to the uncorrected extreme field-of-view the fisheye perspective can produce some oooohs and aaahs from your audience but it shouldn't be used too often in presentations because the effect of awe-inspiring vistas fades rapidly. Besides it isn't exactly easy to achieve a good composition. It is worth to note that you can now generate a distortion-corrected image by using distortion correction tools (e.g. PTLens) so you can combine the best of both worlds (fisheye and corrected ultra-wides) if you're willing to invest some post-processing efforts (at cost of border quality though).

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The first thing you notice is the smallish size of the lens - it is barely bigger than a 50mm standard lens. The build quality is excellent thanks to high quality materials and tight tolerance. The focus ring operates very smooth but it is not damped. The inner lens tube of the Nikkor extends a little bit when focusing towards closer distances so it is using a so-called "linear extension focusing system" rather than an internal one. Typical for all fisheye lenses it is not possible to mount a front filter simply because the extreme field-of-view would cause edge shading here. However, according to Nikon you can use a gelatin filter at the rear of the lens.



The lens has no internal AF motor and relies on a slotted drive screw operated by the camera. As a result AF operation will generate a moderate degree of noise. The AF speed is quite fast but this is really meaningless aspect for such a lens.

Specifications

Optical construction	10 elements in 7 groups inc. 1ED element
Number of aperture blades	7 (rounded)
min. focus distance	0.14m (max. magnification ratio 1:5)
Dimensions	63x63mm
Weight	305g
Filter size	-
Hood	built-in, petal shaped
Other features	-

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