

## dEaringfilm reviews the *Nikon 85mm f/1.4D AF*

AKA: Portrait Perfection

In the right hands there is no finer light focusing device. Even in the wrong hands one can deliver top notch results, that's how good this lens is. Obviously this is a must have for portrait photographers especially under tiring lights and shadows. A good friend of mine Ron Reznick told me to try out this lens and it would produce results better than any other lens for portraits. Well Ron is right, the total image quality surpasses my 70-200mm f/2.8G ED-IF AF-S VR Zoom and is a lot easier to hold.



The reason one pays so much for this lens is its tack sharp images at every aperture to at least F8. It was made to be shot near wide open and I only say near because its brother lens the 28mm F1.4 delivers better at wide open than this lens does. They have a bad half-brother that does decent at F1.4 but I always felt it was too soft and the build quality is not up to par with these two. His name is the 50 1.4 and he was born in [china](#).

For my photography during daylight, I shoot this lens at the lowest ISO whatever camera I have it on and usually F5.6. If I really want to make the model pop out then I focus carefully and choose either F1.4 or F2.8, but F5.6 produces the best results for my style. I know that that 85 1.8 does wonderful at F5.6 but its horrific and distracting bokeh really makes me dizzy depending on the background of the subject of course. The 1.4 weighs about 6 ounces more, which should make no difference at all to you when shooting.

The build quality of this lens is very good, while it doesn't feel as awesome as the 70-200mm f/2.8G ED-IF AF-S VR Zoom it's right up there. This lens with hood balances very nicely on a D2(X, Xs, H, Hs) body and it even manages to feel great on a small body like the D80 without making the body feel too lightweight.

One of the nice things about older lenses like this one with aperture rings is you can open them up all the way and inspect them easily to see if they have dust or other issues inside, its a little more difficult to do this with a new G style lens.

If this lens was only good for portraits and nothing else I might just say it is a one trick pony, but that's not the case. This lens is spectacular for architecture and landscape, it renders fabulous detail and the shadow detail is very good but under that of the 45mm f/2.8P AI-S(the lens cap lens), but its certainly no slouch.

I like talking about the lenses that I like but this guy is getting a little old and needs to step into the digital age. What they could add to this lens in the next version is of course is AF-S, VR, and a few ED elements but I would also love a better hood why the heck not carbon fiber it looks cool and its super light. Ohh and as long as I am making requests how about a closer focusing distance, because film photographers used to be able to get more in the photo at a shorter distance than they do now with this lens in digital. If this means Macro that would be nice too, ohh yeah make it F1.2 and completely water sealed and smaller, thanks Nikon! :)

**Reccomendation:** This is the portrait lens of choice. I have taken more photos with this lens than any other in my collection, so its highly recommended for now and when Nikon goes to 35mm film sensor size.

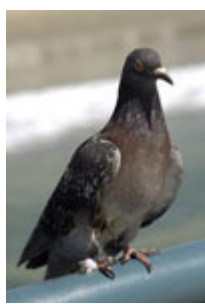
**Performance Wide Open**  5 (f1.4 nearly perfect)

**Performance Stopped Down**  5 (f2.8 to 8 sharp as they get)

**Build Quality**  4 (old design but not bad...)

**Value and Features**  3 (screw focus, and no VR)

Here are a few examples of what I have gotten out of this lens, of course you mileage will vary. When you click a image it will open in a new window. (Tip: I use Firefox and have new windows open as new tabs, really nice feature)



**Links to other reviews of this lens:**

[Michael Weber](#)

[Ron Reznick](#)

For reviews of other lenses see:

[Nikon Lenses Link Collection](#)

[Official Nikon USA Page](#)