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Mastering the Fuji X100

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FOREWORD

WHO NEEDS A HANDBOOK?

You may be wondering why the X100 needs a handbook at all—doesn't the Owner's Manual that comes with the camera suffice? The simple answer for me is no; otherwise, I wouldn't have written this book.

It's not that I find the Owner's Manual inadequate—it's actually pretty good. Its main focus, however, is different from that of this handbook. The Owner's Manual thoroughly documents the technical functions of the X100 and does not include personal opinions or background information. This isn't a failing of the instructions—you wouldn't expect to find such information in an owner's manual.

When I purchase a new technical device, I have a quick look at the owner's manual right away, and then I may not consult it again until I run into a problem. On this point, purchasing this handbook won't make the instruction manual redundant, because the handbook serves a different purpose. You could say that the Owner's Manual provides foundational information and the handbook guides photographers with practical advice for actually creating the images they want. You'll find instructions in the Owner's Manual about how to change the ISO settings of the camera, for instance, but nothing about what this means in a practical sense while you're in the field.

I can say that I've written the book I would have liked to have had after I purchased this camera. You may be asking, "Is it not possible to pick up everything in this book on your own or by reading Internet forums?" Of course it is, and I can't encourage you strongly enough to do that. The discussions that you'll pursue will be fun and will provide insight about very specific issues in ways that a book can't. This kind of research, however,

can be time-consuming and laborious. Not everyone has the time to spend three or four months acquainting him- or herself with the X100. This handbook will enable a quick entry into the practical operation of the X100 and will also answer questions that come up as you spend time taking pictures with your camera.

WHAT YOU'LL FIND IN THIS HANDBOOK, AND WHAT YOU WON'T

This handbook contains mostly personal experiences (both my own and others'), tips, and background information. Topics in this book include both those that I find interesting and those that I think are especially useful for taking pictures with this camera. The range of topics is by no means complete. This book won't teach you how to adjust the menu color scheme or how to create a photobook with your camera. However, you will find information such as how the camera uses contrast detection technology to optimize focus. This handbook is written with the assumption that readers have some basic photographic knowledge and skill. I think it's a safe bet that anyone who forks over \$1,300 for a camera knows what an aperture is.

IS A HANDBOOK ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY?

The X100 is a terrific camera with a slew of features that sets it apart from both established DSLRs and point-and-shoot cameras. I learned a lot while writing this book, and I hope that you'll have the same experience while reading it. Chances are there are experienced readers who don't need a tutorial for getting acquainted with this camera. Nevertheless, I hope the tips and collected information in this book will help even these readers to avoid mistakes and save time. Anyone who likes to exchange ideas with other photographers or who enjoys using other photographers' experiences as inspiration should find this book fun and useful.

WHY ME?

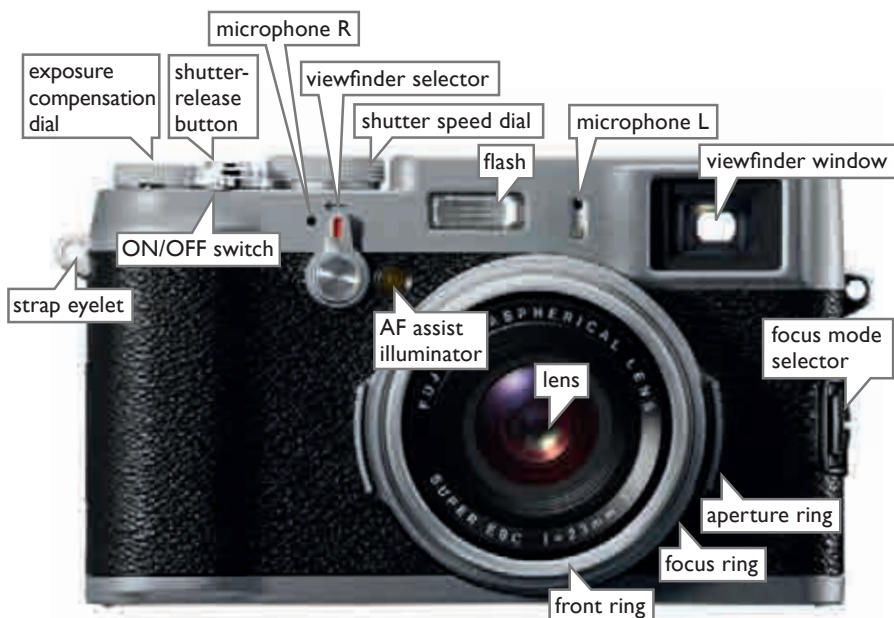
I never had plans to write a book. Three things came together, though, that convinced me otherwise. First, I had just gotten my hands on the camera relatively recently. Second, I was able to free up some time in my schedule over the past few months. And third, I fell in love with the camera right away and had already spent a good deal of time with it. Why not write a book? I also consider myself something of a prototype for the X100 consumer—I represent the target demographic of X100 owners. I’ve personally had questions about the information in this book and now that I’ve examined the camera inside and out, I’m ready to answer them.

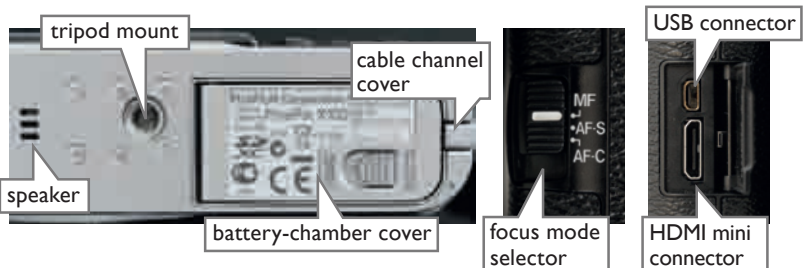
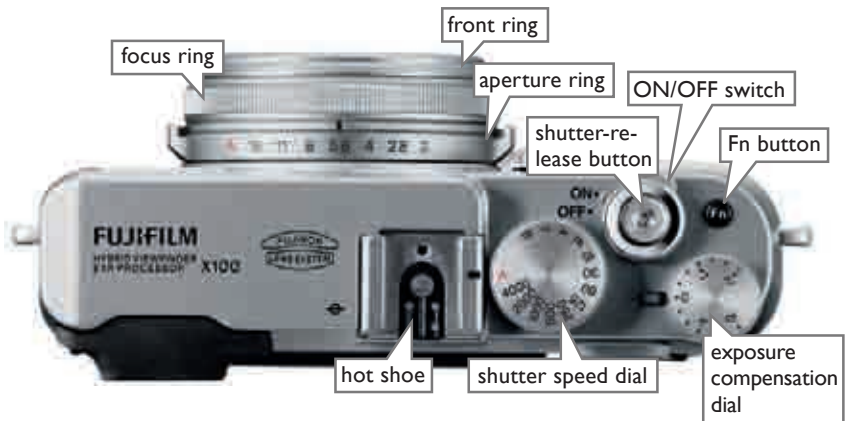
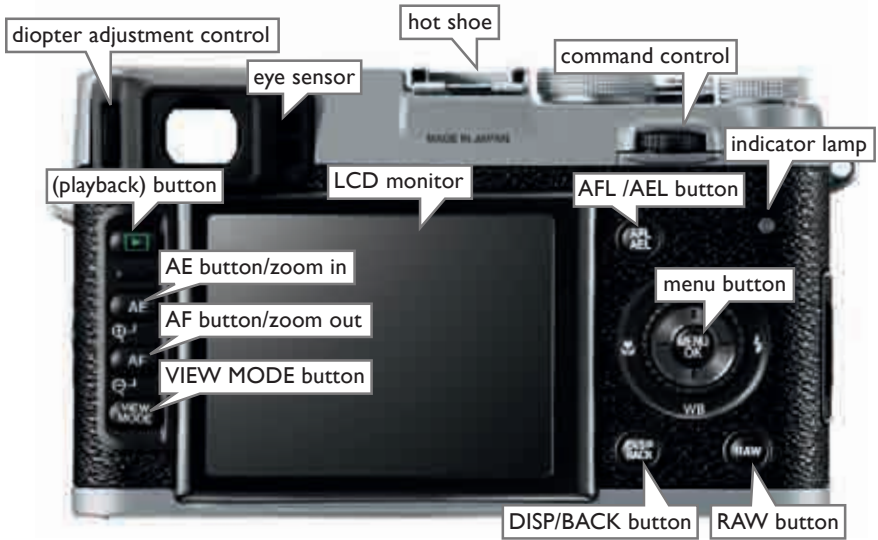
I hope you enjoy the lessons in this book as well as taking pictures with the X100.

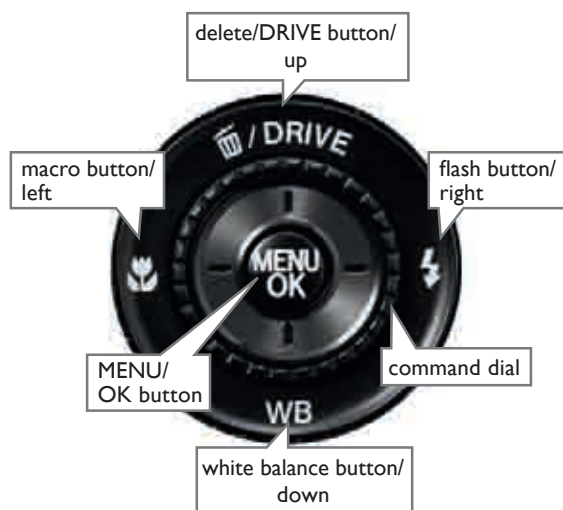
I THE BASICS

Before the actual operation of the X100 is explored in the next chapter, here is some basic information about the camera. In addition to going over the camera's controls, I will also introduce all of the terminology to be sure that we're speaking the same language from the start. The battery, SD card, and firmware will also be touched on briefly. Above all, read the paragraph about firmware closely, in case you haven't updated your camera to version 1.11 yet.

OVERVIEW OF THE CONTROLS







COLOR CODE OF THE LED



Focus is locked.



Focus, exposure or blur warning.
A picture can be taken.



Images are being saved to the SD card.
Additional pictures can be taken.



Images are being saved to the SD card.
Additional pictures cannot be taken.



The flash is charging; the flash will not
be able to fire if a picture is taken now.



Lens or memory error.

NAVIGATING THE MENUS

Use the respective **DIRECTION KEYS** to navigate through the camera's various menus. The **COMMAND DIAL** may also be pressed up or down (in vertical menus) or right or left (in horizontal menus). The center button of the **COMMAND DIAL** is the **OK** button, which you use to confirm your selection (figure 1.1).



Figure 1.1 **COMMAND DIAL** and **DIRECTION KEYS**

Use the **DIRECTION KEYS** or the **COMMAND DIAL** to navigate through the camera's menus and to control other functions that require directional movement (e.g., to move the autofocus frame around the display).

THE CAMERA'S MENUS

The X100 has three main camera menus.

- **SHOOTING MENU** (p. 9)

This menu allows you to choose the settings that affect the process of exposure. You can, for example, define the ISO speed within this menu.

- **PLAYBACK MENU** (p. 10)

Here you can manage your saved images. You may want to delete an unsuccessful shot, for example, or protect one of your favorites from accidental deletion.

- **SETUP MENU** (p. 11)

You can configure the functions that control the camera itself here. This is where you set the camera's language, for instance.

To access these camera menus, press the **MENU** button. If you are in shooting mode when you press the button (not playback mode), pressing the **MENU** button will open up the SHOOTING MENU. Once open, you can use the **COMMAND DIAL** and the **DIRECTION KEYS** to move between the different options. You also have the ability to switch into the SETUP MENU by selecting the corresponding tab on the left side of the display.

If you are in the playback mode, pressing the **MENU** button will bring you to the PLAYBACK MENU.

“SELECTED” MENU OPTIONS

Throughout the book, if I say to highlight a menu option or to cycle through the options, I mean that you should find the selection that I’m describing or move the selector through the options without making any actual selections or activating anything. Conversely, a selected option describes a function or feature that is already confirmed. Activated menu controls are indicated with a small dark bar (figure 1.2).



Figure 1.2

Selected or highlighted

In this figure you can see that the menu option ± 0 is highlighted, but the option $-2/3$ is selected.

FIRMWARE

Firmware refers to the camera's control software. Many manufacturers regularly release new firmware versions to improve their cameras or to remedy glitches. In the case of the X100, I highly recommend the newest firmware update (firmware 1.11, October 2011) because it offers some clear improvements and extends the X100's range of functionality. It's important that you fully charge your battery before installing the firmware update. Otherwise, you run the risk of your camera shutting off during the update process, which can lead to permanent damage. To obtain information about the currently installed firmware on your camera, turn the camera on while holding the **DISP/BACK** button. If you are in need of an update, download the file FPUPDATE.DAT from the following site:

 www.fujifilm.com/support/digital_cameras/software/firmware/x/finepix_x100/index.html

Copy the downloaded file onto a formatted SD card and insert this card into your camera. Then turn on your camera while holding the **DISP/BACK** button as described above. Follow the instructions on the screen to complete the software update. Important! This book uses the firmware 1.11 as a basis, so you should install this update before moving on.

SD CARDS

You can use SD, SDHC, and SDXC memory cards with the X100. Although Fujifilm only guarantees that your camera will work with Fujifilm memory cards and those from SanDisk, you shouldn't have any trouble using cards from other manufacturers. When you purchase your memory card, pay attention to the data transfer rate because the speed at which the X100 writes the images to the memory card is one of its weaknesses. With this in mind, memory cards such as SanDisk's Extreme Pro UHS-I are optimal.

BATTERY

The camera uses an NP-95 rechargeable battery with a capacity of 1800 mAh. It takes about 210 minutes to charge when it is completely drained. The approximate number of pictures that you can take on one battery charge is 300, as reported by the manufacturer. In reality, though, this number depends significantly on how much you use the optical viewfinder, the digital viewfinder, and the LCD monitor when shooting. So the number of pictures you can capture on one charge differs from photographer to photographer and largely depends on your habits and preferences. If you predominantly rely on the optical viewfinder, you can quickly surpass the 300-image mark. Photographers who often find themselves on the go would do well to purchase a second battery.

FIGURES

Some figures in this book—such as those dealing with noise—can be viewed much better using a computer screen as compared to a printed version. You can therefore download a digital version of some of the figures at:

 www.rockynook.com/X100/figures

IMAGES

All images in this book were made with an X100.