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Canon® EOS 7D FOR DUMMIES®

by Doug Sahlin

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Doug is president of Superb Images, Inc., a wedding and event photography company. Doug teaches Adobe Acrobat to local businesses and government institutions. He uses Flash and Acrobat to create Web content and multimedia presentations for his clients. He also hosts *Pixelicious* (`www.pixelicious.info`), a weekly podcast on digital photography, Photoshop, and Lightroom.

Dedication

This book is dedicated to my soulmate Roxanne.

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Introduction

Your Canon EOS 7D is the latest and greatest digital camera on the market with a stunning 18-megapixel capture, Live View, high-definition video, and much more. But all this technology can be a bit daunting, especially if this is your first real digital SLR (single-lens reflex). You no longer have modes like Portrait, Sport, Landscape, and so on. You've graduated to the big leagues. All you have to do is master the power you hold in your hands.

I've been using Canon digital SLRs since the EOS 10D, and I've learned a lot about the cameras since then. I also own an EOS 5D MKII, which has a lot of the features found on your EOS 7D. My goal is to show you how to become one with your camera. I don't get overly technical in this book even though your camera is very technical. I also do my best to keep it lively. So if you want to master your EOS 7D, you have the right book in your hands.

About This Book

If you find the buttons and menus on your shiny new EOS 7D a tad intimidating, this book is for you. In the chapters of this book, I take you from novice point-and-shoot photographer to one who can utilize all the bells and whistles your camera offers. You'll find information about every menu and button on your camera as well as when to use them. I also cover what settings to use for specific picture-taking situations. I also show you how to use the software that ships with your camera.

Foolish Assumptions

Ah yes. Assume. When broken down to its lowest common denominator . . . Okay, I won't go there. But as an author, I have to make some assumptions. First and foremost, you should now own, or have on order, a Canon EOS 7D. If you own one of those cute little point-and-shoot Canon cameras, good for you, but this book won't help you with that camera. You should also have a computer to download your images to. A basic knowledge of photography is also helpful. I know, you probably meet all assumptions. But my editor assumes I'll put this section in this part of the book.

Conventions Used in This Book

To make life easier, this book has several conventions that are used to identify pertinent information — stuff you should know. So to help you navigate this book easily, I use a few style conventions:

- Terms or words that you might be unfamiliar with in the context of photography, I have *italicized* — and I also define these.
- Web site addresses, or URLs, are shown in a special monofont typeface, `like this`.
- Numbered steps that you need to follow and characters you need to type are set in **bold.**
- Margin art is used to identify camera menu icons and camera buttons. When you see one of these icons, it shows you what button to push, or what menu tab to navigate to.
- The Canon EOS 7D menu has pretty little icons for each tab, but no text to describe what each tab does. I name the tabs to make things easier for you, dear reader, and for me and my editor. You'll find a table with tab names in Chapter 2.

The Long and Winding Road Ahead

I divide this book into four parts with each devoted to a specific aspect of your camera. The chapters flow logically from one subject to the next to take you from shooting in Full Auto mode to becoming a seasoned photographer who knows what mode to choose and what settings to use for taking pictures of specific subjects. You can read the book from cover to cover or if you need quick information about a specific topic, peruse the Table of Contents or Index until you find the desired topic. Most of the sections in this book don't require reading additional material.

The following sections offer a brief overview of each part of the book.

Part 1: Getting to Know Your Canon EOS 7D

Part I contains four chapters that help you get up and running with your EOS 7D:

- Chapter 1 introduces you to the camera and shows you how to do some basic tasks.
- Chapter 2 shows you how to take pictures using the two Automatic modes. I show you how to go fully automatic and how to use the Creative Auto mode.

- Chapter 3 shows you how to specify the image format. I show you how to choose JPEG and RAW format, discuss different sizes, and offer my recommendation for the ideal format.
- Chapter 4 shows you how to use the LCD monitor for a myriad of purposes. I show you how to review your images, use the histogram, and more.

Part II: Beyond Point-and-Shoot Photography

In this part of the book, I cut to the chase and show you how to master the advanced features of your camera.

- Chapter 5 shows you how to use Live View mode. I show you how to take pictures with Live View, change autofocus modes, and more. I also show you how to capture movies with Live View. So you're live in Chapter 5.
- Chapter 6 shows you how to use the creative shooting modes. In this chapter, I also show you how to modify camera exposure, bracket exposure, and more.
- Chapter 7 shows you how to use the advanced features of your camera. I show you how to set ISO, set white balance, and much more. I also show you how to use your EOS 7D flash unit wirelessly to trigger off-camera Canon Speedlites.
- Chapter 8 shows you how to use your EOS 7D in specific shooting situations. I discuss sport photography, wildlife photography, landscape photography, and more.

Part III: Editing and Sharing Your Images

This part of the book shows you how to organize and edit your images with Canon's ZoomBrowser EX and Digital Photo Professional.

- Chapter 9 introduces you to Canon's ZoomBrowser EX and Digital Photo Professional. I show you how to download and organize your work, plus show you how to do some basic editing tasks.
- Chapter 10 shows you how to print your images from ZoomBrowser EX and Canon Digital Photo Professional. I also show you how to make contact sheets in both applications.

Part IV: The Part of Tens

The book concludes with two top ten lists, written by yours truly, who happens to have a gap between his teeth like David Letterman, who happens to

be famous for his top ten lists. The lists are grouped according to subject matter, and a splendid time is guaranteed for all. And tonight Mr. Kite is topping the bill.

- Chapter 11 shows you how to create a custom menu and register your favorite settings. I also show you how to add copyright information to the camera and much more.
- Chapter 12 shows you how to create wallpaper from your images, create a screensaver, attach images to e-mail, create a makeshift tripod, and more.

Icons and Other Delights

For Dummies books have icons that contain important bits of information. You can hopscotch from icon to icon and discover a lot. But when in doubt, read the text associated with the icon. In this book, you find the following icons:

- A Tip icon contains information designed to save you time and in some instances, your very sanity.

- This icon warns you about something you should not do; something your fearless author has already done and decided it's not a good thing to do again.

- When you see this icon, it's the equivalent of a virtual piece of string tied around your finger. This is information you want to commit to memory.

- When you see this icon, it's for the geeks in the group who like to know all manner of technical stuff.

You'll also find icons in the margin that show you controls on your camera, and menu tabs.

Shoot Lots of Pictures and Enjoy!

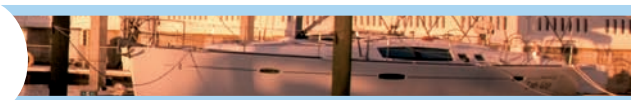
Your EOS 7D is a digital photography powerhouse; use it and use it often. The old adage of "practice makes perfect" does apply though. The only way to become a better photographer and master your equipment is to apply what you know and shoot as many pictures as you can. While you're working your way through this book, keep your camera close at hand. When your significant other pokes his or her head into the room, grab your camera and start practicing your craft. Take one picture, then another, and another, and so on. With practice, you'll know your camera like the back of your hand. You'll also know which rules of photography and composition work for you and you'll start to develop your own style. For that matter, you'll probably amaze yourself, too.

Part I

Getting to Know Your Canon EOS 7D

In this part, I show you the lay of the land and familiarize you with the controls of your EOS 7D. I also show you how to take great pictures automatically and show you how to specify image size and format. If you're curious about how to get around in the menu, I show you that as well. I also show you how to master your LCD monitor. In short, this part shows you everything you need to do to get up to speed with your new toy.

1



Exploring the Canon EOS 7D

In This Chapter

- Getting familiar with camera controls
- Understanding the LCD panel
- Decoding and adjusting the viewfinder
- Attaching and removing lenses
- Using zoom and image stabilization lenses
- Changing basic camera settings
- Using CF cards
- Charging your battery

The Canon EOS 7D has all the latest bells and whistles Canon has to offer. It's a technological marvel that enables you to take great pictures and capture high-definition (HD) video. The camera has a new processor that gives you the ability to capture great images in low light and at a blindingly fast speed of up to 8 images per second, which is ideal for action photography. The camera has an improved, highly customizable autofocus system that gives you more control over autofocus than in the past. And Canon finally offers a camera with a viewfinder that shows you 100 percent of what the lens captures: What you see is what you get. A *dual-axis level* (the equivalent of a spirit level in a tripod) you can display in the viewfinder lets you capture pictures with horizon lines that are level. The camera also has a built-in flash system that can be used to control external Canon Speedlites. Woohoo!!! Smart flash technology.

Getting familiar with all this new technology can seem daunting even to a seasoned photographer. I was impressed, albeit a tad flummoxed, when I saw the first reviews. Even though I'm a seasoned Canon digital single-lens reflex (SLR) user — my first digital SLR was the EOS 10D — I still had a bit of a learning curve when I first had the camera in hand, chomping at the bit

to take some pictures. But it's my job to get down to brass tacks with new technology and show you how to master it. The fact that you're reading this probably means that you want to know how to use all the bells and whistles Canon has built into the camera. In this chapter, I familiarize you with the controls, the camera lens, the battery, and the memory cards you use to capture images with the camera.

Getting to Know the Controls

If you're a longtime Canon user, you know that you can do an awful lot with the camera by using external controls, which saves you from poking around inside pesky menus. The camera controls are easy to reach and give you access to many powerful features. Although you may think it seems like a daunting task to know which button does what, after you use the camera for a while, you'll automatically know which control gives you your desired result and then reach for it instinctively, without taking your eye from the viewfinder. But first, you need to know what each control does. I explain the controls you find on the outside of the camera in the upcoming sections.

Exploring the top of your camera

The top of the camera (as shown in Figure 1-1) is where you find the controls you use most when taking pictures. The top of the camera is where you change settings like ISO (International Organization for Standards) and shutter speed, choose a shooting mode, and press the shutter button to take a picture. You can do lots of other things from the top of the camera, which in my humble opinion, is the most important real estate on it, with the possible exception of the lens. I suggest you get to know the controls on the top of your camera intimately, like the back of your hand. Many photographers, including me, make it a point to memorize where the controls are and access them without taking an eye off the viewfinder. Here's what you find on the top of the camera:

- **Shutter button:** This button prefocuses the camera and takes a picture. I discuss this button in greater detail in Chapter 2.
- **Multi-function button:** This button changes the function of a multi-purpose button, and is used extensively when specifying which autofocus point or zone is used to achieve focus. I show you how and when to use this button when related to a specific task.
- **Main dial:** This dial changes a setting after you press a button. For example, after you press the ISO speed button, you move this dial to change the ISO speed setting. I show you how to use this button as it relates to a specific task.
- **LCD Panel Illumination button:** Press this button when you're in dim or dark conditions and you need to shed a little light on the LCD panel.