



Home >> Photography >> Film Equipment

Nikkor 35-70mm f/2.8 AF-D

I love this lens! Even if I buy a 28-70 AF-S lens, I won't sell this baby. It will go on a spare body to use around the house or on family occasions. People complain about it not being wide enough or long enough in it's coverage but given it's very high quality optics, I'm not so sure I would want to risk that for a bit of extra coverage on either end. Initial reports on the new 28-70 AF-S lens indicate that all is not peaches and cream in that lens' 35mm focal length. Also given the use of the Silent Wave motor, the cost of this lens is sky high at more then double what the 35-70mm goes for. In that regard the 35-70 is a bargain given what it offers you.



The lens is five inches long and weighs about a pound so it's bit bigger and heavier then consumer level zoom lenses but smaller then many of the other pro-quality zooms it competes against. It balances very nicely on my F70 and F90x and my hand wraps around it with ease. It's built with a push-pull zooming barrel that was so popular with older Nikkors. I'm quite use to this one-handed motion of pulling and pushing instead of the newer style twisting since my 80-200 is also of similar zooming motion. The lens also offers a 1:4 macro range at the 35mm length of the lens. In macro mode, the pulled full-length of the lens is locked at the push of a small silver button. The part of the lens that you would normally grasp for push/pull zooming is then rotated for fine tuning the macro range. This is in addition to the focusing ring at the front of the lens. With an \$80 Nikon 6T close up filter, one can obtain a 1:1 ratio without having to purchase the \$600 60mm 2.8 micro or the \$1000 105mm 2.8 micro lenses. Obviously macro shots would be better with the dedicated lenses but the 35-70mm does allow for macro on the cheap (one lens instead of two and not compromising on the infinity focusing capabilities).



Note to the above statement of the lens reaching 1:1 macro with the 6T close up filters. A recent email exchange with another user indicates that this is not so and with the 6T, at best a 1:3 ratio is achieved. I have never used the 35-70mm lens with the 6T and simply restated what Moose Peterson wrote in his Nikon guide books. Moose may have to clarify his statements regarding this lens as the user who contacted me indicated that only by using the Nikon PK13 (27.7mm extension tube) was he able to obtain 1:1. (Sept. 28, 2000)

At the time I bought this lens, I couldn't believe I was spending over a thousand dollars on lens. I always thought the camera body was the most important aspect of photography. This lens led me to the correct way of thinking of placing the lens ahead of almost all other factors in determining image quality.

I have always been satisfied with the quality of images I have gotten from this lens. The focusing is precise and fairly quick on a F90x. The images are sharp and if my shots turn out bad, I can always trace it back to my own error or other circumstances that lead to bad shots. I may not have the best composition but I can pretty much be assured that the subjects will have great color, contrast and sharpness.

My viewpoints are obviously biased but I just can't fault this lens in any meaningful way. One very minor quibble is that the front element rotates so it makes for a slight hassle for polarizer use. Since I don't usually use this lens for landscapes, it's a minor point and the odd time that I do use a polarizer for other uses, I never thought much of it. Another quibble would be the lens hood for this lens. The dedicated lens hood for the 35-70mm 2.8 is the HB-1. It is only good for the 35mm end of the zoom range, as it is a not scalloped type. It is at least a bayoneting type, so filter stacking is available without getting into vignetting problems and the lens hood can be reversed onto the lens for storage purposes. I would love to see Nikon come up with a scalloped lens hood for this lens since they have created them for the new AF-S zooms (the 28-70 and 80-200).

Save for a bit of extra coverage at either extreme, this lens is tops and I'm very hesitant to consider other lenses as possible replacements in order to get that extra bit of coverage. The 24-120 and newer 28-105 have beckoned me like sirens calling Odysseus to the rocks (the 28-70 AF-S is a major enticement but given its cost, it's not a realistic purchase now). But I'm not so sure that these lenses will give me as much satisfaction as my 35-70 and so I remain tied to my steadfast mast of a lens despite the picayune criticisms leveled at it.

Update July 2007 - After writing I'd never sell this lens, I did in 2006 after finding that it just did not match the optical quality of the 28-70mm f2.8 AF-S lens at wide-angles and wide open. Just shows that one should never declare absolutes, because photographic technology is a moving target, especially in the digital age.

CAMERAS & MORE WITHIN BUDGET
Authorized Dealer
Greatest Selection
Highest Online Rated
Since 1973 SHOP NOW

BH The Professional's Source
SINCE 1973

Search all B&H

Search and Shop at the B&H Store

Fisheye joins the Lensbaby Optic Swap System.
photo by chris hornbecker
LENSBABY





Taken with the 35-70mm lens

[what's new](#) | [photography](#) | [edwin's world](#) | [readers gallery](#) | [site map](#) | [NikonLinks](#)

[Correspondence & About this website](#)

Copyright © 1998-2010 Edwin Leong

Google™

Search

jn WWW jn CameraHobby.com

WORLD'S LARGEST SOURCE FOR
CAMERAS · CAMCORDERS · COMPUTERS · HOME
ENTERTAINMENT · AND MUCH MORE!
PROFESSIONAL'S SOURCE SINCE 1973