

Taking Panoramic Pictures



Many new digital cameras offer a feature called panorama stitch mode. It allows you to create panoramic shots by combining up to three shots together into one large picture. Here's some things to keep in mind while using it.



Plan your picture

Your camera is preset to stitch together a certain number of images. Most use three. Compose your vision within that number to get the desired effect.

Overlap your pictures

To help you stitch together pictures, panoramic stitch mode gives you a slice of the previous image in your viewfinder. For a seamless stitch, line up your next shot over the slice from the previous picture.



Watch the seams

Your camera automatically edits pictures while stitching them. This works best on static objects that don't change position from picture to picture, like background scenery. Try not to place subjects that move, like people, at the edges of the photograph. If they get too close, they will enter the stitching area, which could result in undesired cut-offs.

Generally, people use panoramic mode to take dramatic shots of beautiful landscapes – which works great. But it's even more fun to experiment. It's digital, after all – you can always delete any shots you don't want.

Go vertical

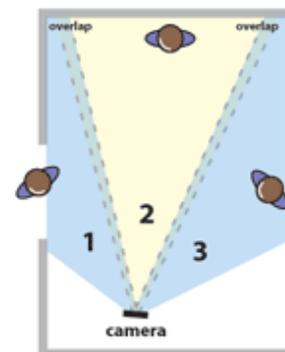
Panorama mode stitches vertical pictures just as well as horizontal ones. Shoot vertical pictures of cascading waterfalls or towering skyscrapers – and get the full effect.

Show the whole scene

Take individual shots around the dinner table, or a huge stadium.

Use camera trickery

Show one subject moving across a panoramic shot. Take shots of your child in different places across your front yard – somersaulting on the grass, or swinging from a tree. The result is a fun, three dimensional image your kids will love.



From www.kodak.com



If your camera does not have a panorama stitch mode you can still take pictures for a panorama and stitch the pictures using software like Photoshop Elements or one of the free programs listed below.

Scott Kelby's Tips for Shooting Panoramas

- Shoot your panorama on a tripod. (Or if you don't have a tripod do not rotate the camera around you; instead, rotate yourself around the camera).
- Shoot vertically (in portrait orientation) rather than horizontally (in landscape orientation). It'll take more shots to cover the same area, but you'll have less edge distortion and a better looking panorama for your extra effort.
- Switch your camera's white balance to Cloudy. If you leave it set to Auto, your white balance will change between segments.
- Press your shutter button halfway down to set your exposure. Then look in your viewfinder and make note of the f-stop and shutter speed.
- Switch your camera to manual mode and dial in the f-stop and shutter speed you noted above. If you don't, and you shoot in an auto-exposure mode of any kind, your exposure will change.
- Once you focus on the first segment, turn off auto-focus for your lens. That way, your camera doesn't refocus as you shoot the different segments.
- Before you shoot your first segment, shoot one shot with your finger in front of the lens—that way, you'll know where your panorama starts. Do it again after the last shot.
- Overlap each segment by 20–25%. Make sure that about 1/4 of your first shot appears in the second shot. Each segment needs to overlap by at least 20% so Photoshop's stitching software can match things up. This is very important.
- Shoot fairly quickly, especially if clouds are moving behind your landscape.
- If you are using a tripod, use a shutter release, or at the very least a self-timer, so you don't have any camera movement as you're shooting each segment.

From www.thepeachpit.com

There are a couple of free software programs that do a decent job of autostitching:

Microsoft ICE does a good job and keeps the resolution of your original pictures. Download the 32-bit Windows version from

<http://research.microsoft.com/en-us/um/redmond/groups/ivm/ICE/>

CleVR is a website that has a free software to download to create panoramas. You can then upload them to share. The final panorama is resized so the resolution is less than the original.

www.clevr.com