



Sunshades for your Camera LCD & Sunshades for your Computer When out on Location

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If you need to photograph outside you quickly learn that LCD monitors become nearly invisible in outside light. Even when you can see the image, you can't easily judge contrast, color balance, or focus.

Even PDAs that advertise the latest technology for brightness and visibility, these monitors turn into a weak reflection when you are out in the sun.

Most camera monitors are poor to begin with (the Kodak SLR/n monitor sets a record for over-saturation and lack of detail). Take them out in the sun and you are better off just turning on the histogram and bracketing heavily. Then once you are back inside, download the files and learn which direction you should bracket to in the future. If you do photography every day soon you will learn to capture good shots outdoors (by bracketing) even when the monitor is next to invisible.

Computer shade, Photokina Tradeshow 2004

Help is on the Way

Hoodman is one of the first companies that capitalized on the obvious need for sun shades for LCD monitors on cameras and computers. Of course it would help if the LCD companies would invent monitors that were more visible outdoors, but until that happens a sun shade is the best option.

The nice folks at Hoodman immediately provided camera LCD shades and a shade for our computer. But sun shades for point-and-shoot cameras get in the way when you are transporting the camera. We found the sun shades awkward. They quickly got lost in the shuffle (realize that we travel with a complete crew and lots of equipment when we are out on location in Central America photographing).

The hood for the laptop computer lasted longer, but it was not a practical design. The opening was not large enough; the angle of view was awkward (and was hard to change). Often we got so frustrated we took it off. We found that a home-made hood made of a cardboard box cut-out was easier to use. The other glitch was that the hood did not close intuitively.

We like the initiative of the family that runs Hoodman, and wish them success with their other products. Perhaps this computer hood would be okay for other people, so ignore our comments if this hood works for you. But we got so disillusioned that we went for several months with no hood at all, or our cardboard box solution.

Then we kept seeing the bellows-style (accordion style) shades at the Camera Bellows booth. Camera Bellows is a company in England that makes the bellows for most of the large format cameras in Europe and in the US too.

At either Photokina or PhotoPlus the Lee Filters manager kindly gave us a monitor shade to try out. We flew this down to Guatemala and tried it out.



Lee filters, computer shade at Photokina 2004

Wow, this works.

This “Screen-Shade” design is superior in all respects. First of all even an impatient person like myself can figure out how to unfold, and fold back up an accordion. It is idiot-proof; nothing to bend out of shape.

Second, this fits on the computer perfectly. No jerry-rigging, no guessing where or how to attach it. And it won't pop off either, or blow away in the wind.

Third, you can move the screen in or out, and angle it any way you want. And the position stays put. No slow collapse.

You can obtain these from

Screen-Shade
2237 North Hollywood Way,
Burbank, CA 91505

Tel: (800) 576-5055, (818) 238-1220
Fax: (818) 238-1228

www.screen-shade.com
E-mail: info@screen-shade.com

Sunshades



Laptop and sunshade, demonstration at Photokina Tradeshow 2004



Lee Filters Screen Shade at Photo Plus Tradeshow 2004

Summary

There are two types of sun shades: for cameras and for computers. Most companies that make one also make the other.

We see the friendly and energetic folks of Hoodman at PhotoPlus trade show, and I am guessing they are at PMA also?

The Lee Filters, Screen-Shade, and Camera Bellows teams are at PhotoPlus, Photokina, and I guess at PMA also.

Of all the shades we have seen, we like the Screen-Shade best for our computer monitor. Now that we have tried out their Screen-Shade for laptop monitors, we may check out their shades for our Nikon D100, Kodak SLR/n, Nikon CoolPix, and Leaf Valeo 22.

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If a product does not work for us, don’t give up on that product. Perhaps your needs, expectations, or budget are different than ours.

If a product works great for us, this does not automatically mean it will work flawlessly for you. Your situation may be different than ours. So always do additional independent research before you decide what to purchase.

And if you have a deadline, or an important new photo assignment, be sure to test new products or accessories in advance, before things get hectic.

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