

# Getting the Lay of the Land

## *In This Chapter*

- ▶ Taking a tour of external controls
- ▶ Looking at lenses and memory cards
- ▶ Using the optional electronic viewfinder
- ▶ Selecting from menus
- ▶ Customizing your display
- ▶ Viewing and adjusting picture-taking settings
- ▶ Customizing basic operations

**A**t first glance, the Olympus PEN E-PL1 could easily be mistaken for just another digital point-and-shoot camera. But don't be fooled by your camera's diminutive size or the simplicity of its outward design: Under that small, sexy exterior lies a lot of photographic muscle.

This chapter covers the basics you need to start enjoying all the E-PL1 has to offer, introducing you to its external features, showing you how to work with interchangeable lenses, and explaining how to navigate menus and select camera settings. In addition, the last part of the chapter details options that enable you to customize basic camera operations.

## *Taking a Quick Tour*

If you've used a digital camera before, some external controls on the E-PL1 may be familiar to you. The button that you press to erase pictures, for example, is marked with the universal delete symbol — a trash can. But some features are unique to the E-PL1, so the next three sections provide an overview of the function of each external control. (I discuss these controls in more detail later in this book.)



## Topside controls

As shown in Figure 1-1, the top of the camera sports a couple features:



**Figure 1-1:** Use the Mode dial to choose a basic exposure mode.

- ✓ **Power button:** I won't insult your intelligence by telling you what this button does. But see the section "Exploring setup options on the Custom menu," near the end of this chapter, to find out about the Sleep setting. That setting enables you to specify how quickly you want the camera to automatically shut off to save battery power.
- ✓ **Shutter button:** I'm sure you also figured out this one. But see Chapter 2 to find out how to specify whether you want the camera to record a single shot, a continuous series of shots, or a self-timer shot each time you press the button.
- ✓ **Mode dial:** You select the shooting mode, or exposure mode, via this dial. Chapter 3 explains the simplest, most automatic modes — iAuto and Scene (SCN) — as well as Movie mode. Chapters 6 and 7 cover the more advanced photography modes (P, S, A, and M). For help with ART mode, check out Chapter 9.
- ✓ **Flash hot shoe:** *Hot shoe* is the traditional photography term for "contact on top of the camera for mounting an external flash." But on the E-PL1, the electrical contacts on the hot shoe also enable the camera to communicate with the optional electronic viewfinder. See the upcoming sidebar "Awesome add-on: The VF-2 electronic viewfinder," later in this chapter, for some additional information.



✓ **Focal plane marker:** See that little circle with the line through it, between the Mode dial and the hot shoe? That line represents the plane at which the lens focuses light onto the *image sensor* (the element that replaces film in a digital camera). If you ever need to know the exact distance between your subject and the camera, basing the measurement on this mark produces a more accurate camera-to-subject distance than using the end of the lens or some other external point on the camera body as your reference point.

## Back-of-the-camera controls

Traveling over the top of the camera to its back, you see the controls labeled in Figure 1-2. The following list introduces you to each item:



**Figure 1-2:** Use the Start/OK button and surrounding arrow keys to navigate menus and adjust picture-taking settings.

Fn 

- ✓ **Flash Up switch:** To raise the built-in flash, slide this switch to the right and release it. Chapter 3 introduces you to flash; Chapter 6 gets into more advanced flash features. (To close the flash, just press its top gently down.)
- ✓ **Accessory port:** If you buy the optional electronic viewfinder (a choice I highly recommend), it attaches into this slot. See the upcoming sidebar “Awesome add-on: The VF-2 electronic viewfinder” for more details. The port also enables you to attach an optional stereo microphone.
- ✓ **Fn (Function)/Thumbnails button:** This button performs a different function depending on whether you’re shooting pictures or reviewing them in playback mode:
  - *Shooting function:* By default, pressing this button during shooting toggles the Face Detection feature on and off. (Chapter 2 introduces you to Face Detection.) But you can set the button to perform a variety of other functions instead (see Chapter 10).
  - *Playback function:* During playback, pressing the button cycles the display from single-image view to thumbnails view to calendar view. See Chapter 4 for playback details.

To save time and space, I refer to this button simply as the Fn button from this point forward.



- ✓ **Zoom button:** As on most digital cameras, pressing this button during playback magnifies the image. But here’s a twist: On the E-PL1, you can also magnify the live view during shooting, which can be helpful for fine-tuning focus. See the later section “Zooming the live display” in this chapter for details.
- ✓ **Movie/Protect button:** As indicated by its name, this button also accomplishes a different act depending on whether you’re shooting or reviewing pictures:
  - *Shooting mode:* By default, this button is used for one-button movie recording. Press the button to start recording, and press again to stop. Chapter 3 explains the art of E-PL1 movie making.
  - *Playback mode:* Note the little blue key directly above the button. That symbol indicates that during playback, you press the button to “lock” the picture file and protect it from accidental erasure. Chapter 4 has details. (As a reminder of the button’s playback function, the key is blue, just like the symbol on the Playback button.)

You can change the shooting function of the Movie button, just as you can assign a different task to the Fn button. Chapter 10 provides details.



- ✓ **Playback button:** Press this button to set the camera to playback mode. See Chapter 4 for all the ways you can customize the playback display.

- ✓ **Menu button:** Press this button to access camera menus; see the section “Ordering from Camera Menus” for the fine points you need to know about the process.
- ✓ **Info button:** Pressing this button changes the amount and type of data displayed on the monitor during shooting and playback. The upcoming section “Monitor Matters: Customizing the Shooting Display” explains how you can tweak the display in shooting mode; Chapter 4 covers playback display options. This button also comes into play for some other operations, such as changing the level of magnification when you zoom the display.
- ✓ **Start/OK button and arrow pad:** This collection of buttons is key to most operations on the camera.

After displaying menus, for example, use the arrow keys to select a menu item and then press the Start/OK button to select that item. You also use the Start/OK button during shooting to access control screens that enable you to quickly adjust picture-taking settings. And notice that each of the four arrow keys bears a label: The label tells you that you can press the button to directly access the function indicated by the label. For example, you can display flash settings by pressing the right-arrow key — the one sporting the lightning bolt, which is the universal symbol for flash.

To save time and space in this book, I refer to the Start/OK button as just OK (okay?). And I refer to the arrow keys by their position on the arrow pad — “press the right-arrow key, press the down-arrow key,” and so on.



- ✓ **Erase button:** During playback, you can erase photos by pressing this button. Chapter 4 has details.
- ✓ **Speaker:** Finally, note the tiny holes just above the OK button/arrow key cluster. When you play movies or picture files that contain sound, the audio comes wafting through those holes, which lead to the internal speaker. (And yes, you read me correctly: You can annotate your still photos with audio notes; see Chapter 9 to find out how.)

## And the rest . . .

Just for good measure, the following list details features found on the front, right side, and bottom of the camera:

- ✓ **Connection ports:** Under the flap on the right side of the camera, you find two ports that enable you to connect the camera to other devices, as shown in Figure 1-3. The USB/AV (Universal Serial Bus/Audio Video) port is for connecting the camera to a computer, printer, or standard definition television set. The HDMI (High-Definition Multimedia Interface) port enables you to connect the camera to an HD display for playback.

Cables for making the USB/AV connections ship with the camera. To make an HD connection, you must purchase an HD cable. (Chapter 4 has details about connecting to a television; Chapter 5 explains how to connect the camera to a computer for picture download.)

- ✓ **Battery/memory card chamber:** Open the cover on the bottom of the camera to access the chamber that holds both the battery and the memory card, as shown in Figure 1-4. The upcoming section “Working with Memory Cards” details installing and using memory cards.

To find out how to monitor the battery level, see the upcoming section “Monitor Matters: Customizing the Shooting Display.” And see Chapter 10 for a menu option that controls how depleted you want the battery to become before the camera warns you that you’re soon to be running on empty.

- ✓ **Tripod mount:** The little screw hole just next to the battery chamber is provided for mounting the camera on a tripod.

When the camera is mounted on a tripod, you can’t access the battery chamber. Double-check that your battery is charged and your memory card is inserted before you connect the camera to the tripod.

- ✓ **Lens-release button:** Last but not least is the little silver button on the front of the camera, next to the lens. Press the button to disengage the lens from the lens mount before removing the lens. The following section discusses this and other lens-related information.



**Figure 1-3:** Open the cover on the right side of the camera to reveal ports for connecting the camera to a computer or TV.



**Figure 1-4:** The battery and memory card share an apartment next to the tripod mount.



## Working with Lenses

To take best advantage of the features of your E-PL1, match the camera body with a Micro Four Thirds lens. If you bought the E-PL1 kit, which includes the camera body plus the Olympus 14–42mm M.Zuiko Digital lens, you own this type of lens.



*Micro Four Thirds* refers to the camera design and technology that permits the E-PL1 to take such a small, lightweight form. If you're interested in the science and history of the Micro Four Thirds format, visit [www.four-thirds.org](http://www.four-thirds.org), an Olympus educational Web site.

When dealing with lenses, the important point to know is that Micro Four Thirds lenses were designed specifically to partner with the E-PL1. Like the camera itself, these lenses are built to be as small and lightweight as possible, and they support the camera's entire range of features. (Note the *M* in M.Zuiko; it distinguishes Micro Four Thirds lenses from standard Zuiko lenses. As for *Zuiko*? It stems from two sources: an abbreviation created to refer to one of Olympus' original lens-manufacturing plants and a rough translation of the Chinese expression for "golden light." Won't you sound smart at the next meeting of the photo club!?)

At any rate, although you can mount other types of lenses on the camera, you need to purchase an adapter to do so. And with some lenses, you lose access to certain important camera features. For example, you can't use autofocus with some lenses; you must focus manually. The Olympus Web site has details about lens options.

Because of those complications — and because covering all the variations involved with using your camera with different types of lenses is way, way beyond the page count this book allows — instructions in this book presume that you're using a Micro Four Thirds lens, and illustrations feature the 14–42mm Micro Four Thirds kit lens. If you use a different lens, check your lens manual for help with any questions that you can't sort out.

With that bit of business out of the way — okay, it's probably about two or three bits — the next sections explain the basics of working with a Micro Four Thirds lens.

### Attaching and removing lenses

Follow these steps to attach a Micro Four Thirds lens to your camera:

1. Turn off the camera.
2. Remove the cap that covers the lens mount on the front of the camera.
3. Remove the cap that covers the back of the lens.

4. **Hold the lens in front of the camera so that the little red dot on the lens aligns with the matching dot on the camera body.**

Official photography lingo uses the term *mounting index* instead of *little red dot*. Either way, you can see the markings in question in Figure 1-5.

Again, the figure (and others in this book) shows you the E-PL1 with the Olympus 14–42mm M.Zuiko Digital lens. Assuming that you stick with Micro Four Thirds lenses, other lenses should work and look much the same, but if you have any questions, consult the lens manual.

Mounting index dots



**Figure 1-5:** When attaching the lens, align the index markers as shown here.

5. **Keeping the dots aligned, position the lens on the camera's lens mount.**
6. **Turn the lens in a clockwise direction until the lens clicks into place.**

In other words, turn the lens away from the shutter button side of the body, as indicated by the red arrow in the figure.

To detach a lens, take these steps:

1. **Turn off the camera.**
2. **Locate the lens-release button, labeled in Figure 1-6.**
3. **Press the button while turning the lens counterclockwise until the lens disengages from the lens mount.**
4. **After removing the lens, protect it by placing the rear protective cap onto the back of the lens.**

If you aren't putting another lens on the camera, cover the lens mount with the protective cap that came with your camera, too.

Lens-release button



**Figure 1-6:** To disengage the lens, press this button.

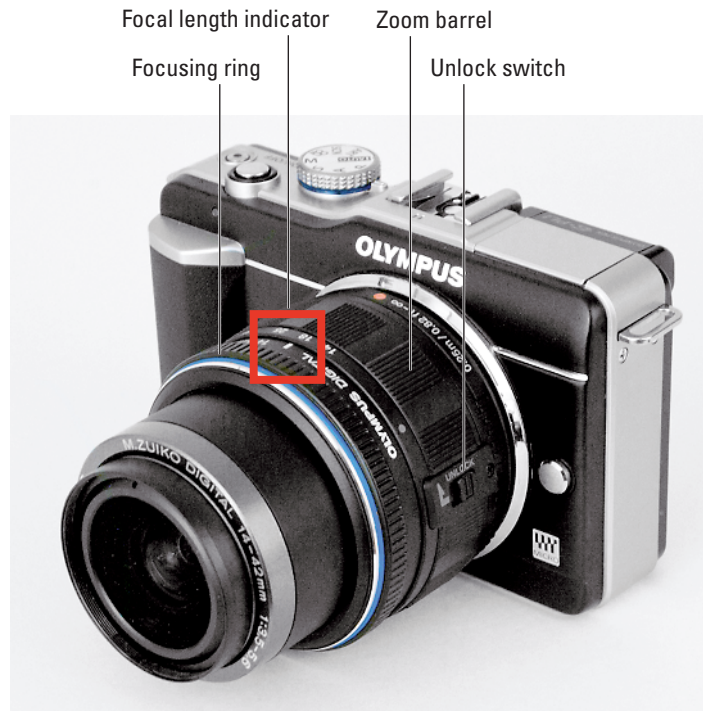




Always attach and remove lenses in a clean environment to reduce the risk of getting dust, dirt, and other contaminants inside the camera or lens. For added safety, point the camera body slightly down when performing this maneuver; doing so helps prevent any flotsam in the air from being drawn into the camera by gravity.

### *Familiarizing yourself with the lens*

The kit lens (and some other Micro Four Thirds lenses) sports the features shown in Figure 1-7. Get familiar with the following key components:



**Figure 1-7:** Get to know the functions of these lens features.

- ✓ **Zoom barrel:** If you own a zoom lens (such as the kit lens), zoom in and out by simply twisting the zoom barrel.
- ✓ **Focal length indicator:** Every lens can be characterized by its *focal length*, measured in millimeters. The focal length determines the *angle of view* (the area the lens can capture), the relative size of objects in the frame, and the *depth of field* (the distance over which objects remain sharply focused).



A zoom lens gives you access to a range of focal lengths — in the case of the kit lens, from 14mm to 42mm. At the edge of the zoom barrel, you see numbers representing various focal lengths within that range (refer to Figure 1-7). As you zoom in and out, you can determine the current focal length by looking at the position of the focal length indicator, labeled in Figure 1-7. For example, in the figure, the indicator shows that the lens is currently zoomed to a focal length of about 18mm.

Be sure to review Chapter 7 to discover how the results produced by a given focal length are different on a Micro Four Thirds camera than on a 35mm SLR camera.

- ✓ **Focusing ring:** Even the best autofocus systems have trouble locking in on certain subjects — highly reflective objects and animals behind fences are two that come to mind. To save you the frustration of trying to autofocus in those tough shooting scenarios, your lens offers manual focusing.

Before you can focus manually, you must set the camera's AF (autofocus) mode to MF (manual focus) or S-AF+MF (single autofocus with manual override). Chapter 7 provides details on how to select this setting.

- ✓ **Unlock switch:** If you've worked with a zoom lens on an SLR, it may have had a Lock switch that enabled you to lock the lens at a specific focal length. The kit lens, on the other hand, has an Unlock switch. Hmm, what gives? A really cool retracting feature found on the kit lens and some other Micro Four Thirds lenses, that's what. Move your eyeballs to the following section to find out more.



## *Retracting and unlocking the lens*

Some Micro Four Thirds lenses, including the kit lens, feature a nifty retracting feature. When you're not using the camera, you can retract the lens so that it takes up even less space in your camera bag than usual.

Check out Figure 1-8. The left side of the figure shows the smallest footprint of the lens at its unretracted position. On the right side of the figure, you see the reduced lens bulk you can accomplish by retracting the lens.

The key to the retracting feature is the Unlock switch on the zoom barrel. Try it out:

- 1. Holding the lens by the zoom barrel, press and hold the Unlock switch forward.**  
Refer to Figure 1-8 for a look at the switch.
- 2. Twist the zoom barrel counterclockwise until the lens is fully retracted.**  
Just to be clear: Twist the barrel toward the shutter button side of the camera.
- 3. Release the Unlock switch.**



**Figure 1-8:** When you finish shooting, you can retract the lens to reduce the camera size even further.



The next time you turn on the camera, the monitor displays the screen shown in Figure 1-9, telling you that the lens is locked. To unlock the lens, just twist the zoom barrel clockwise. You don't need to press the Unlock switch.



**Figure 1-9:** If the lens is retracted, this message appears when you turn on the camera.

## Working with Memory Cards

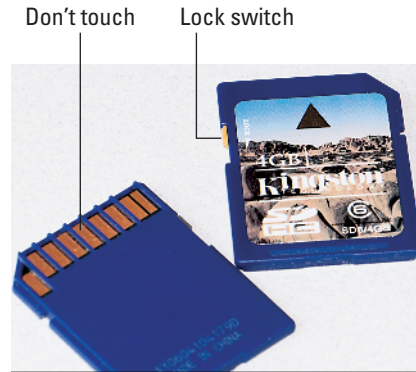
Instead of recording images on film, digital cameras store pictures on *memory cards*. The E-PL1 uses a specific type of memory card — an *SD (Secure Digital) card* — as shown in Figure 1-10. You can also use the newer, high-capacity Secure Digital cards, labeled SDHC.

Safeguarding your memory cards — and the images you store on them — requires just a few precautions:

- ✓ **Handling cards:** Don't touch the gold contacts on the back of the card. (See the left card in Figure 1-10.) When cards aren't in use, store them in the protective cases they came in or in a memory card wallet. Keep cards away from extreme heat and cold as well.

- ✓ **Locking cards:** The tiny switch on the side of the card, labeled *lock switch* in Figure 1-10, enables you to lock your card, which prevents any data from being erased or recorded to the card. Press the switch toward the bottom of the card to lock the card contents; press it toward the top of the card to unlock the data.

Chapter 4 shows you how to protect individual images on a card from accidental erasure by using the camera's picture-locking feature.



**Figure 1-10:** Avoid touching the gold contacts on the card.

- ✓ **Inserting a card:** First, be sure that the camera is turned off. Then open the battery cover on the bottom of the camera — the card and the battery share this compartment. Put the card in the card slot with the label facing the front of the camera, as shown in Figure 1-11. Push the card into the slot until it clicks into place.



**Figure 1-11:** Insert the card with the label facing the front of the camera.

- ✓ **Formatting a card:** The first time you use a new memory card or insert a card that's been used in other devices (such as an MP3 player), *format* it. Formatting ensures that the card is properly prepared to record your pictures.

Formatting erases *everything* on your memory card. So before you format, be sure that you copy any pictures or other data to your computer.

To format a memory card, display Shooting Menu 1 and select Card Setup, as shown on the left in Figure 1-12. Press OK to display the second screen in the figure. Then select Format and press OK again. On the confirmation screen that appears next, select Yes and press OK. (If you need help using menus, the upcoming section “Ordering from Camera Menus” explains all.)





**Figure 1-12:** Format a memory card through the Card Setup option on Shooting Menu 1.



Some computer programs enable you to format cards as well, but it's not a good idea to go that route. Your camera is better equipped to optimally format cards.

- **Removing a card:** If you just took a picture, look for the memory card access icon, labeled in Figure 1-13, and wait until it disappears, indicating that the camera has finished recording the file to the card. Then turn off the camera, open the battery cover, depress the memory card slightly, and then let go. The card pops halfway out of the slot, enabling you to grab it by the tail and remove it.

If you turn on the camera when no card is installed, a message appears on the monitor to remind you. If you have a card in the camera and you get these messages, try taking the card out and reinserting it. Also be sure that you haven't locked the card (using the card's lock switch).

Memory card access symbol



**Figure 1-13:** Don't turn off the camera or remove the memory card until the card access icon disappears.



One side note on the issue of memory cards and file storage: Given that memory cards are getting cheaper and larger in capacity, you may be tempted to pick up an 8GB (gigabyte) or 16GB card thinking you can store a gazillion images on one card and not worry about running out of room. But memory cards are mechanical devices that are subject to failure, and if a large card fails, you lose lots of images. And putting aside the potential for card failure, it's darned easy to misplace those little guys. So I carry several 4GB SD cards in my camera bag instead of relying on one ginormous card. Although I hate to lose any images, I'd rather lose 4GB worth of pictures than 8 or 16GB.

## Awesome add-on: The VF-2 electronic viewfinder

Micro Four Thirds cameras lack viewfinders — it's one main reason why the camera can be so small. If you miss having a viewfinder, you can purchase the Olympus VF-2, an electronic viewfinder that attaches to the camera via the accessory port just beneath the camera's hot shoe. You can rotate the viewfinder upward as much as 90 degrees to suit the viewing angle you need, as shown here.

In addition to its flexible neck, the VF-2 has other powers you don't get from a traditional, optical viewfinder. Simply put, the VF-2 can display anything that you can view in the monitor, including menus and camera settings. You also can use the viewfinder for picture playback — and the clarity of the playback display is really stunning.

There are a couple downsides: You can't use an external flash, which also requires the camera's hot shoe, at the same time as the viewfinder. (You can still use the built-in flash.)






The other issue is cost. At a suggested retail price of \$280, the viewfinder isn't a casual investment. But I suspect that if you visit your local camera store to try it out, you'll have a hard time leaving without it.

As much as I love the viewfinder, it's an *optional* accessory, so the rest of this book assumes that you're working with the monitor only. But know that if you're using the viewfinder, everything works just the same way — you just see the menus, screens, and so forth in your viewfinder instead of on the monitor. For help attaching, removing, and adjusting the viewfinder display, see the camera manual and the instruction sheet that ships with the viewfinder. Also be aware that shortly after the E-PL1 came to market, Olympus released an update to the camera firmware (internal software) that enables some viewfinder features that aren't described in the manual; for details, visit the Olympus Web site ([www.olympus.com](http://www.olympus.com)).



## Ordering from Camera Menus

You access many of your camera's features via internal menus, which, conveniently enough, appear when you press the Menu button. Features are grouped into five menus, described briefly in Table 1-1.

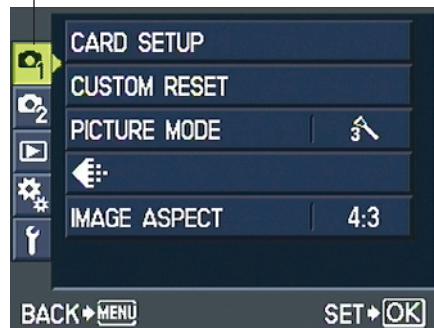
Table 1-1	Menus	
Symbol	Open This Menu . . .	. . . To Access These Functions
	Shooting 1	Memory card setup, picture quality, and a few other basic photography settings
	Shooting 2	Shutter-release mode, image stabilization, and additional photography settings
	Playback	Picture playback and editing features
	Custom	Advanced photography and setup options
	Setup	Basic camera customization options



One menu, the Custom menu, is hidden by default. That menu contains a slew of advanced photography and camera customization options that aren't of much interest to casual photographers, so Olympus chose to simplify the experience for those users. But you, of course, want to explore all your camera's features, so the upcoming list, which details the basics of working with menus, uses the task of turning on the Custom menu as an example.

➤ **Display menus:** Press the Menu button. The monitor displays a screen similar to the one you see in Figure 1-14. Along the left side of the screen, you see icons representing the menus. (Again, the fourth icon, for the Custom menu, is hidden by default.) The highlighted menu is the active menu; options on that menu appear to the right. In the figure, Shooting Menu 1 is active, for example.

Menu icons



**Figure 1-14:** The fourth menu (Custom menu) is hidden by default.

- ✓ **Choose a different menu:** Press the up- or down-arrow keys to move the highlight over the menu. To access the option that enables the Custom menu, select the Setup menu, as shown on the left in Figure 1-15.



**Figure 1-15:** To display the hidden menu, choose this setting on the Setup menu.

- ✓ **Select a menu item:** Press the right-arrow key to jump from the menu icons to the options on the selected menu. Then press the up- or down-arrow key to move the highlight over the option you want to choose. To enable the Custom menu, choose Menu Display, as shown on the left in Figure 1-15. Press OK to display the screen that offers available settings for the menu item, as shown on the right in the figure.

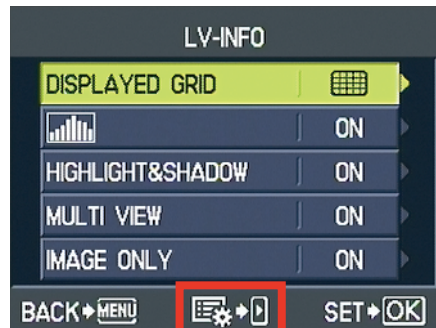


Olympus aficionados often refer to the Custom menu as the *gear menu* because of the tiny gear symbols used to represent it. For the same reason, some people call the Setup menu the *wrench menu*. I use the official menu names, but you may encounter the unofficial lingo when visiting online camera forums and other photography sites.

- ✓ **Change the setting for the selected item:** After highlighting the option, you typically take one of two routes: Either press OK or press the right-arrow key.



How do you know which button to push? The camera reminds you by displaying symbols at the bottom of the menu screen. For example, in Figure 1-15, the symbols tell you to press the Menu button to go back one screen and to press the OK button to select the highlighted option. But in Figure 1-16, note the middle icon: It tells you that on this screen, you press the right-arrow key to access a secondary menu of options.



**Figure 1-16:** This icon tells you to press the right-arrow key to access a submenu.



How the various options appear varies depending on the menu item. Sometimes you see a screen that looks like the one on the right in Figure 1-15, with only the current setting displayed. For other menu items, you see a submenu listing all the available settings. Either way, press the arrow keys (up, down, right, left) to scroll through the various settings. When the setting you want is highlighted, press OK (or follow the prompts that appear at the bottom of the screen).

To turn on the Custom menu, for example, press the up- or down-arrow key to display On, as shown on the right in Figure 1-15, and then press OK.

- ✓ **Go back one screen:** Press the Menu button or the left-arrow key.
- ✓ **Exit the menus and return to shooting mode:** You can press the Menu button (you may need to press it several times to back out of all the screens). But a quicker option is to simply press the shutter button half-way and release it.

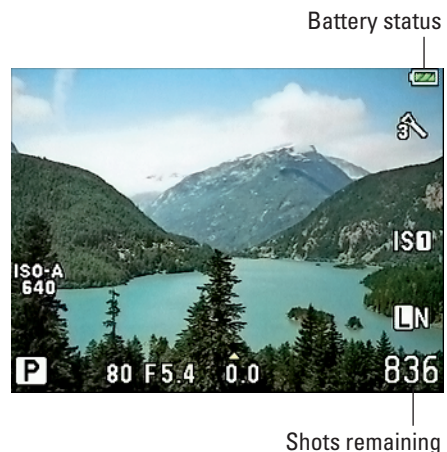


The Custom menu is divided into ten submenus that are assigned alphabetic labels (A, B, C, and so on). In this book, when I tell you to “choose Custom Menu A,” I mean to open the Custom menu and then select the A submenu. In addition, some menu items are represented by symbols rather than text labels. For example, the option you use to set the camera’s date and time is labeled with a little clock symbol. Because it’s difficult to insert those symbols within the text here, I instead provide you with a text name for the symbol and, in most cases, label the menu in an accompanying figure.

## Monitor Matters: Customizing the Shooting Display

When you’re not using the menus or viewing your pictures in playback mode, the monitor displays some of the critical picture-taking settings, as shown in Figure 1-17. The type of data that appears depends on your exposure mode; the figure shows the display for the P exposure mode, explained in Chapter 6.

Later chapters detail each symbol; for now, just note the battery status icon in the top-right corner. The icon appears for a few seconds when you turn on the camera and then disappears to declutter the screen. If the



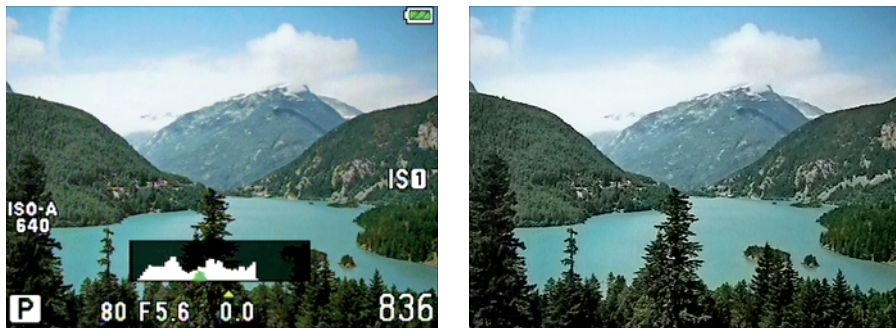
**Figure 1-17:** The battery status icon appears briefly when you turn on the camera and then disappears.

battery begins the run low, the icon appears half-full; if the battery is nearly depleted, the icon blinks red.

One other key item, the shots remaining value, appears in the lower-right corner of the display. This number tells you how many pictures will fit in the space remaining on your memory card. If the number is low, grab another card, visit Chapter 4 to find out how to erase some pictures, or pay a trip to Chapter 5 for details on how to download photos to your computer. Chapter 2 explains how your Image Quality settings affect the number of shots you can fit on a card. Chapter 3 explains how Movie Quality settings affect how many minutes of recordings will fit.



You're not limited to the display style shown in Figure 1-17, however. By pressing the Info button, you can add a histogram to the mix, as shown on the left in Figure 1-18. (If you're unfamiliar with histograms, Chapter 4 explains them.) Another press of the Info button clears all the data from the screen so that you see your subject only, as shown on the right in the figure.



**Figure 1-18:** Press the Info button to switch between the initial data display and additional display modes.

If you don't care to see the two display modes shown in the figure, you can disable them. You can also access a couple other display modes that are turned off by default. The following section explains your options. Following that, you can discover some another neat trick for customizing the display — a feature that lets you magnify your view of the scene.

### *Enabling and disabling display styles*

To control which display styles appear when you press the Info button, take these steps:

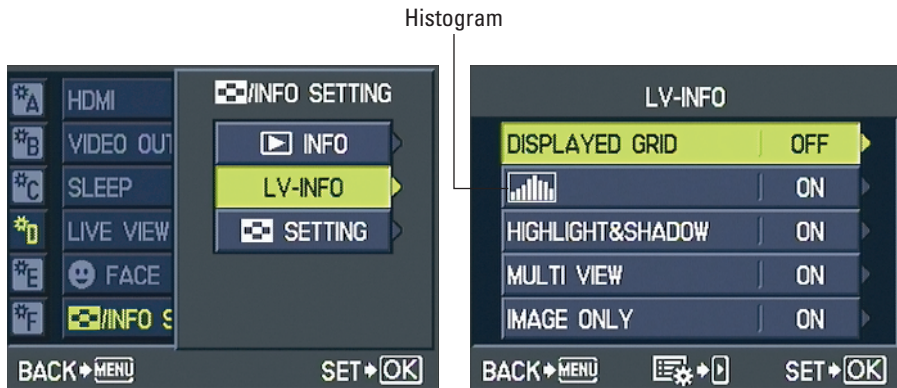
1. **Select Custom Menu D, as shown on the left in Figure 1-19, and press OK.**



**Figure 1-19:** Choose which displays to enable through this option on Custom Menu D.

2. Choose the **Thumbnails/Info Setting** option, as shown on the right in **Figure 1-19**, and press **OK**.

You see the screen shown on the left in **Figure 1-20**.



**Figure 1-20:** You can control which of these five displays are enabled.

3. Select **LV-Info** and then press **OK**.

(The LV is a reference to *live view*, which is what the monitor displays when you shoot with the E-PL1 — a live view of the scene before the lens.)

After you press **OK**, you see a list of display options that you can enable or disable, as shown on the right in **Figure 1-20**. In some shooting modes, not all display options are available; you can choose from all displays only in P, A, S, and M modes.

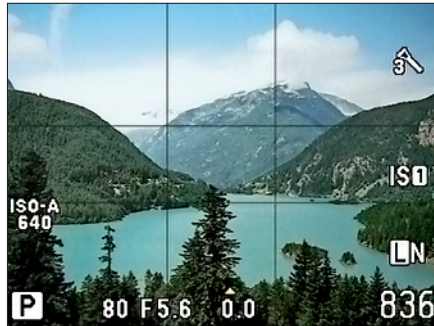
4. Enable the display options you want to use; turn off the others.



This screen requires that you press the right-arrow key after selecting an option. After pressing the right-arrow key, you see the screen where you can enable or disable the display.

Here's an overview of the five styles you can enable or disable. (You can't disable the default display style, which is the one shown in Figure 1-17.)

- *Displayed Grid:* Enabling this option adds gridlines to the screen, as shown in Figure 1-21. The grid is helpful for ensuring that the horizon line is level or in other cases where you want to compose the shot so that objects fall into some other precise alignment.



**Figure 1-21:** The grid display is helpful for checking that the horizon line is level.



To enable the grid, choose Displayed Grid, as shown on the left in Figure 1-22, and then press the right-arrow key. You then see a list of four grid styles, as shown on the right in Figure 1-22. Make your selection and press OK. To disable the grid display, return to the menu and choose Off.



**Figure 1-22:** You can choose from four grid styles.

- *Histogram:* Choose the menu item represented by the histogram symbol (refer to Figure 1-20) to enable or disable the histogram display. This display mode is enabled by default.
- *Highlight & Shadow:* This display alerts you to areas of the frame that may be seriously overexposed or underexposed at your current exposure settings. When you press the shutter button halfway, overexposed areas are indicated by a red overlay, and underexposed

areas are indicated by a blue overlay. This display option is disabled by default and isn't available in ART or Movie mode.

- *Multi View*: This display option is available only when the Mode dial is set to P, A, S, or M. When you apply Exposure Compensation, an exposure adjustment covered in Chapter 6, or White Balance, a color setting discussed in Chapter 7, you can use this display mode to preview the effects of four settings at a time. Figure 1-23 shows an example of the Exposure Compensation preview. I leave this display at its default setting, Off, until I need it. That way, I don't have to press the Info button to cycle past it each time I want to change the display style.
- *Image Only*: Enabled by default, this view eliminates all data from the screen. (Refer to the right side of Figure 1-18.) If you don't appreciate this view, set the option to Off.



**Figure 1-23:** The Multi View display enables you to preview the effects of four Exposure Compensation settings side-by-side.

**5. After setting your display options, press OK to return to the main menu.**

**6. To return to shooting, press the shutter button halfway and release it.**



After you set up the display styles you want to use, just keep pressing the Info button to cycle the monitor from one display to the next.

## Zooming the live display

Most digital cameras, including the E-PL1, enable you to magnify an image during playback to take a close-up look at the photo. (Chapter 4 provides specifics.) But the E-PL1 adds a new trick to the zoom bag: In any shooting mode but Movie mode, you can zoom the live preview to check details in the scene or to ensure that focus is spot on. In fact, if you use autofocus, you can press the shutter button halfway while the display is zoomed to focus on the object currently visible in the frame. (Chapter 7 provides details on focusing.)

To zoom the live preview, take these steps:



**1. Press the Zoom button.**

A green rectangle appears onscreen, as shown on the left in Figure 1-24.



**Figure 1-24:** Press the Zoom button to magnify the display for a close-up look at your subject.

2. Use the arrow keys to move the green rectangle over the area you want to inspect.

3. Press the Zoom button a second time.

The area under the green rectangle becomes magnified in the frame, and you see four little green triangles, as shown on the right in Figure 1-24.

In the lower-right corner, a value appears to show the current magnification level. For example, a 7x magnification is active in Figure 1-24.

4. Press the arrow keys to scroll the display to see other areas of the frame.
5. To change the magnification level, press the Info button, press the up- or down-arrow key to set the value, and press Info again.

After you press Info the first time, the magnification value becomes active, as shown in Figure 1-25.

You can then press the up- or down-arrow key to select magnification values of 7x, 10x, and 14x magnification. Another press of the Info button deactivates the setting and returns you to zoom mode.

6. To exit the magnified display, press OK.



**Figure 1-25:** Press the arrow keys to scroll the zoomed display; press the Info button to change the magnification level.



When you use this feature, understand that you're not actually zooming the lens — just magnifying the onscreen display, as you can do when reviewing your pictures in playback mode. You can take a picture with the display zoomed, but your photo will include everything within the frame and not just the magnified area.

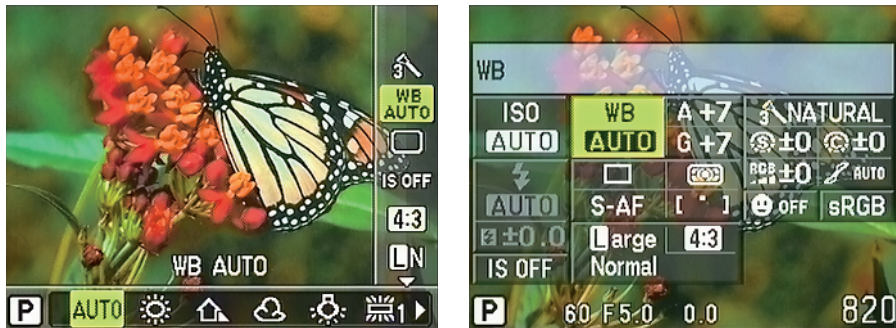
## Monitoring and Adjusting Photography Settings

You can adjust photography settings, such as aperture, shutter speed, and focusing method, in a variety of ways — some of which are fairly obvious, and some, not so much. Depending on the photography setting you want to change, you may be able to adjust it using one or all of the following options:

- ✓ **Menus:** Shooting Menus 1 and 2 contain the most basic picture-taking options, such as the Image Quality setting (resolution and file format, explained in Chapter 2). The Custom menu contains a plethora of advanced options that enable you to fine-tune color, focus, exposure, and more.
- ✓ **Live Control screen:** Through the Live Control screen, as shown on the left in Figure 1-26, you can scroll through a variety of settings, one by one, and then quickly adjust a setting by using the arrow keys. The next section provides details.



By default, pressing OK displays the Live Control screen in all exposure modes except iAuto. In that mode, you instead see the Live Guide screens (see Chapter 3). However, you can enable the Live Control screen for iAuto mode if you prefer. See the next section for help.



**Figure 1-26:** The Live Control display (left) and Super Control Panel (right) enable you to adjust settings without digging through menus.

- ✓ **Super Control Panel:** Some photographers (including me) prefer to view all critical picture-taking settings together, as shown on the right in Figure 1-26. Olympus refers to this display as the Super Control Panel. As with the Live Control screen, use the arrow keys to select and adjust the available settings.

The Super Control Panel is disabled by default, but you can enable it in addition to, or instead of, the Live Control screen. See the next section to find out how.

- ✓ **Camera buttons:** You can access a few settings directly by pressing the keys on the arrow pad. For example, pressing the right-arrow key brings up the screen through which you select flash settings. In most cases, the process from that point is the same as when you use the Live Control or Super Control Panel displays.

Instructions throughout the book mention all options that you can use for adjusting camera settings. But so that you don't have to wade through lots of step-by-step specifics on each page — “display the Live Control screen, press the up-arrow key to select the Flash setting, press the right- or left-arrow key to choose your option, press OK to return to shooting” — instructions and figures simply point you to where to find the setting being discussed. Ditto for menus: Instructions tell you to “adjust the setting via the AF Mode option on Custom Menu A” rather than stepping you through each button-press required to use the menus.

Your part in this *keep it quick and simple* plan involves familiarizing yourself with the process of using menus, the Live Control display, and Super Control Panel display. For the basics of using menus, see the section “Ordering from Camera Menus,” earlier in this chapter. For details about enabling and using the Live Control screen and Super Control Panel, read on.

## Setting your control screen preferences

By default, pressing OK during shooting produces one of two screens, depending on your exposure mode:

- ✓ **iAuto mode:** Pressing OK brings up the Live Guide screens, which help you manipulate aspects of your photo without having to know a thing about photography. Chapter 3 explains this feature.
- ✓ **All other modes:** You instead see the Live Control screen (refer to the left example in Figure 1-26).

For Movie mode, the Live Control screen is the only control screen available. But for iAuto mode, you can choose to enable or disable the Live Guide, Live Control, and Super Control Panel screens. For all other modes, you can enable or disable the Live Control and Super Control Panel features. And you can set up different preferences for different exposure modes as well.

To set up your control screen preferences, follow these steps:

- 1. Select Custom Menu D, as shown on the left in Figure 1-27, and press OK.**

Don't see the menu? It's hidden by default; track back to the section “Ordering from Camera Menus” to find out how to bring it into view. That section also provides more specifics of using menus, if you need help.





**Figure 1-27:** Enable the Super Control Panel through Custom Menu D.

2. Press the up or down arrows to scroll the screen until you see the Control Setting option, as shown on the right in Figure 1-27.
3. Press OK.

The screen shown on the left in Figure 1-28 appears, offering three options. You can set control screen preferences for three exposure modes or mode groups: iAuto; the advanced exposure modes (P/A/S/M); and the ART and Scene modes (ART/SCN). You can't adjust the control screen for Movie mode.



**Figure 1-28:** You can set different preferences for different shooting modes.

4. To set preferences for iAuto mode, select the first option and press OK.

The screen shown on the right in Figure 1-28 appears. Here, you can enable or disable each of the three possible control screens for iAuto mode: the Live Guide, Live Control, and Super Control Panel (abbreviated SCP in the menu).

5. Select a display option and press the right-arrow key to display the screen where you can turn the option on or off. Make your selection and press OK.
6. Press the Menu button or left-arrow key to return to the main Control Setting screen (refer to the left screen in Figure 1-28).
7. Repeat Steps 4–6 for the second group of exposure modes (P, S, A, and M).
8. Go around the track once more to set your preferences for the remaining two modes (ART and SCN).
9. To exit the menus and return to shooting mode, press the shutter button halfway and then release it.

### *Switching between control displays*

Assuming that you enable more than one display for an exposure mode, you need to remember the following two techniques for displaying and switching them:

- ✓ **To display a control screen:** Press OK.
- ✓ **To toggle the display to the next control screen:** Press the Info button.



As you know if you explored the earlier section related to changing the shooting information displays, pressing the Info button also changes the amount and type of data that appears on the monitor when you're *not* trying to adjust settings. So remember the key: To switch to one of the control screens, press OK first and then press the Info button to change to a different control screen.

The next two sections explain how to actually make use of the Live Control and Super Control Panel displays. Again, Chapter 3 details the Live Guide display.

### *Adjusting settings via the Live Control display*

The following steps walk you through the process of adjusting a picture setting via the Live Control display:

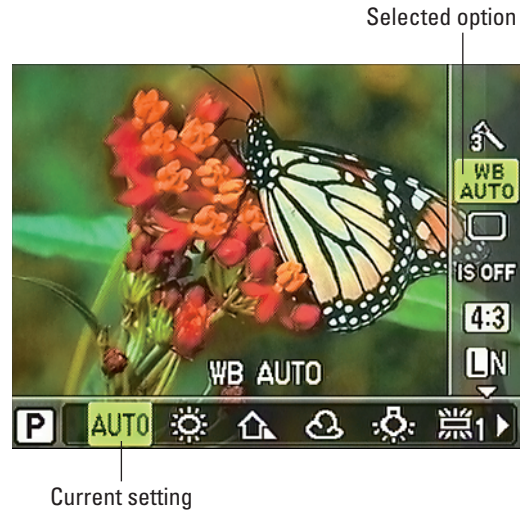
1. **Set the Mode dial on top of the camera to any setting except iAuto.**

By default, the iAuto mode is linked to the Live Guide screens, covered in Chapter 3. If you prefer to work with the Live Control display, see the preceding section to find out how to enable it for iAuto mode.

2. **If you're currently viewing menus or have the camera set to playback mode, press the shutter button halfway to return to shooting mode.**
3. **Press OK.**

The Live Control screen becomes active, and you see a screen similar to the one in Figure 1-29. The relevant areas to note are

- Icons running down the right side of the screen represent the picture options you can adjust, which vary depending on your shooting mode. You can control more settings in the P exposure mode, for example, than in the SCN (Scene) modes.
- The highlighted icon is the currently selected setting. In the figure, the White Balance setting is selected. (Don't worry — you'll come to recognize what all those icons mean after a few days of working with your camera. And if not, later chapters decode all the various symbols.)
- Settings available for the selected option appear in a row along the bottom of the screen. Again, the highlight indicates the current setting. In the figure, the Auto White Balance setting is selected. A text label above the icon strip offers a hint as to the actual name of the setting.



**Figure 1-29:** Press the up- or down-arrow keys to highlight the picture option you want to adjust; press the right- or left-arrow keys to select a setting.

**4. Press the up- or down-arrow keys to select the camera option you want to adjust.**

As you do, the settings strip at the bottom of the screen updates to reflect possible settings for that option.

**5. Press the left- or right-arrow keys to select the setting you want to use.**

Just move the highlight over the setting.

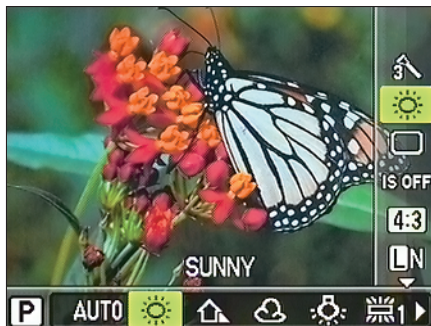
And now for one of the really cool features of the E-PL1: As you select some settings, the monitor preview shows you the effects on the scene. One of those preview-enabled settings is the White Balance option, a color-related function you can explore in Chapter 7. For example, Figure 1-30 shows how changing the White Balance setting from the Auto setting used in Figure 1-29 to the Sunny setting affected the picture colors.

To take advantage of this live preview feature in some shooting modes, you must disable another option, Live View Boost. See the “Exploring setup options on the Custom menu” section later in this chapter for details.

6. **To adjust another picture-taking option, press the up- or down-arrow key to highlight its icon on the right side of the screen.**

Then use the left- and right- arrow keys to select an option for that setting. And so on. And so on.

7. **To exit the Live Control screen and return to shooting, press the shutter button halfway.**



**Figure 1-30:** You can see how a change to the White Balance setting alters your photo in the live preview.

## Using the Super Control Panel (SCP)

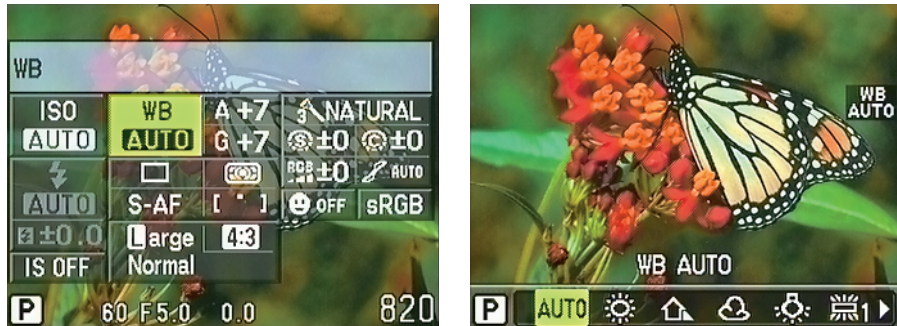
The Live Control screen enables you to concentrate on a single setting at a time. (Experimenting with just one setting on each photography outing is a great way to learn, by the way.) But as you advance in your photography knowledge, you’ll figure out how to combine multiple settings to craft the picture that you have in mind. For example, you might use a particular exposure setting with a specific focusing setting to capture a waterfall and then dial in a totally different combination to photograph a child playing with a puppy.

When you’re ready to consider all the critical photography settings as a unit, you may prefer to abandon the Live Control screen in favor of the Super Control Panel. Or you can enable both displays and then switch between them as needed.



Before you can use the Super Control Panel (abbreviated SCP in the camera screens and in some parts of the manual), you must enable it through Custom Menu D. Skim backward through this chapter, to the section “Setting your control screen preferences” to find out how.

After enabling the display, press OK to bring it to life. If one of the other control displays appears, press Info until you see the Super Control Panel, which looks like the screen shown on the left in Figure 1-31.



**Figure 1-31:** Use the arrow keys to select an option and then press OK to access available settings for that option.

Here's the lowdown on selecting and adjusting settings via the panel:

- 1. Press the arrow keys (up, down, left, right) to move the highlight over the option that you want to adjust.**

In Figure 1-31, the White Balance setting is selected. The icon represents the current setting for the option; in the figure, the display indicates that the White Balance option is set to Auto. For some options, a text label appears at the top of the panel — note the WB at the top of the screen in Figure 1-31. For others, you get just another icon (but in most cases, the icons are pretty easy to figure out).

- 2. Press OK.**

The control panel is replaced by a strip of icons representing the available settings at the bottom of the screen, as shown on the right in Figure 1-31. The screen is a modified version of the settings screen that appears in the Live Control display.

- 3. Press the right- or left-arrow key to select the icon that represents the setting you want to use.**

A text label above the icon strip identifies each setting.

- 4. If you want to change another setting, press the Info button to return to the Super Control Panel.**

Or just don't press any buttons for a second or two.

When no buttons are pressed for a few seconds, the camera locks in the setting you just chose. Then it redisplay the Super Control Panel. The option you selected in Step 2 remains highlighted and shows your new setting.

- 5. Repeat Steps 1–4 to adjust other settings.**
- 6. To exit the panel and return to shooting, press the shutter button halfway.**

## Reviewing Basic Setup Options

Your camera offers scads of options for customizing its performance — the display options covered earlier in this chapter represent just a few of the ways you can make your camera, well, *yours*.

Later chapters explain settings related to actual picture taking, such as those that affect flash behavior and autofocus. The rest of this chapter details additional options related to initial camera setup, such as setting the date and time, adjusting monitor brightness, and the like.

### Cruising the Setup menu

Start your camera customization by opening the Setup menu, as shown in Figure 1-32. As you can see, some menu items are represented just by icons rather than text labels. So for easy reference, I add my own text labels to those menu items in the figure.

- ✓ Date and Time:** Select this option and press OK to display the screen where you can enter the current date and time. Press OK when you finish.

Taking this step is important because that information is recorded as part of the image file. In your photo browser, you can then see when you shot an image and, equally handy, search for images by the date they were taken.

- ✓ Language:** This option determines the language of text on the camera monitor. Scrolling through this list is like a visit to the United Nations — you can choose from more than 30 languages. Make your selection and press OK to return to the Setup menu.

Monitor brightness/color temperature

Language Date/Time



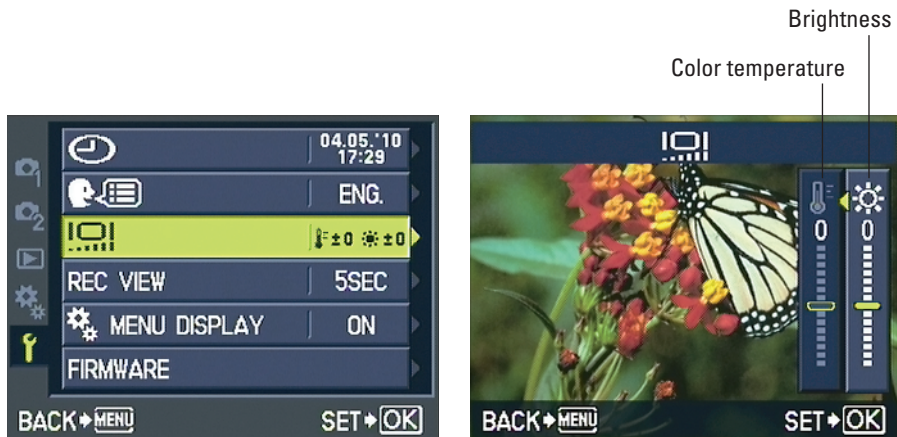
Custom Menu Display



TIP

**Figure 1-32:** Visit the Setup menu to set basic operational preferences.

- LCD Brightness and Color Temperature:** Choosing this option displays the screen shown on the left in Figure 1-33. As with most digital cameras, you can adjust the monitor brightness to suit the ambient light in which you're working. But you also can affect the monitor *color temperature*. Chapter 7 explains this term fully, but the short story is that you can set the monitor to make the colors appear warmer (more red) or cooler (more blue). This adjustment affects *only* how the monitor displays picture colors during playback, however. It's provided mainly so that when you connect the camera to a TV for playback, you have a way to tweak the display.



**Figure 1-33:** Adjustments to the monitor color temperature affect picture playback only.

To adjust the monitor, press the right- or left-arrow key to highlight the brightness scale or the color temperature scale, labeled in Figure 1-33. Press the up- or down-arrow key to set the level of adjustment and then press OK to return to the Setup menu.

I caution you against making either adjustment to your monitor on a regular basis, however, because it may influence your judgment of whether your picture's exposure or colors are off.



- Rec View:** After you take a picture, the camera displays it for five seconds on the monitor. You can adjust this instant review period or disable it entirely; Chapter 4 discusses this and other playback options. The Rec View setting affects still photography only, so the menu option is disabled when the Mode dial is set to Movie.
- Custom Menu Display:** Enabling this option brings the Custom menu out of hiding. See the earlier section “Ordering from Camera Menus” for details.



- ✓ **Firmware:** Select this option and press OK to view a screen that shows you what version of the camera *firmware*, or internal software, your camera is running. You see two separate firmware items, one related to the camera body and one to the lens. At the time of publication, the most current version of the body firmware is 1.1, and the lens firmware is version 1.0.

Keeping your camera firmware up-to-date is important, so visit the Olympus Web site ([www.olympus.com](http://www.olympus.com)) regularly to find out whether your camera sports the latest version. You can find detailed instructions on how to download and install any firmware updates on the site. Note that the update to the body firmware (from version 1.0 to version 1.1) is an important one: It improves autofocus speed and enables additional display options related to the electronic viewfinder.

### Exploring setup options on the Custom menu

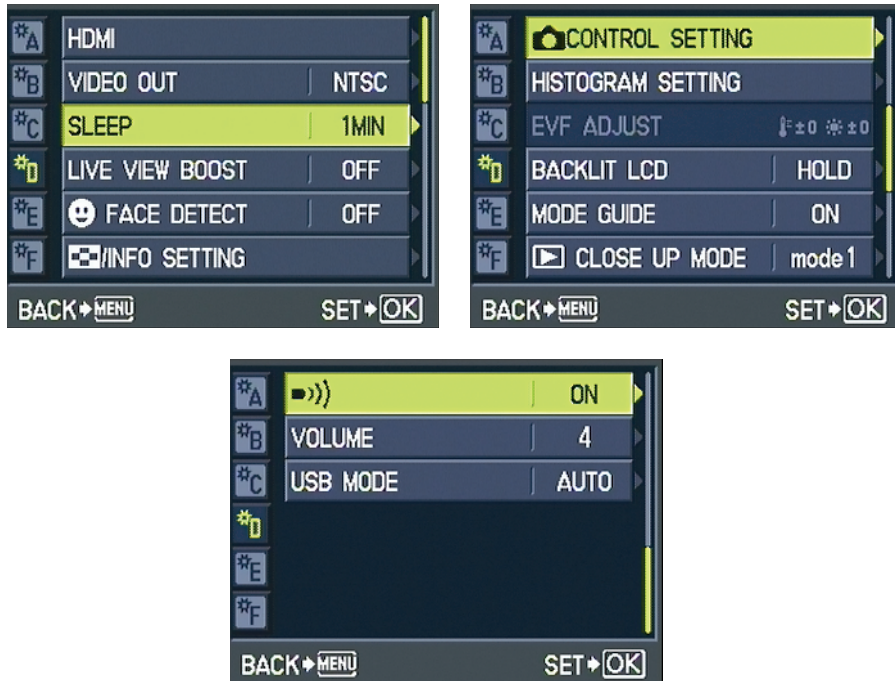
Custom Menu D, visible in Figure 1-34, leads to three screens of options, all shown in Figure 1-35. The following list details just those options that affect basic camera operations; later chapters detail the features related to picture-taking or playback. (Check the index if you need help finding the section that describes a specific menu item.)



**Figure 1-34:** Custom Menu D contains some additional important camera setup options.

- ✓ **Sleep:** To help save battery power, the camera is set by default to turn itself off after one minute of inactivity. Through the Sleep option, you can vary this automatic shutdown interval to 3 minutes, 5 minutes, or 10 minutes. You also can completely disable the auto shutdown by selecting the Off setting.
- ✓ **Live View Boost:** If you turn on this feature, the camera automatically adjusts the brightness of the monitor according to changes in the ambient light. Sounds good, but here's a catch: Enabling Live View Boost prevents the live view from reflecting adjustments you make to exposure in some shooting modes. For that reason, I leave Live View Boost at its default setting, Off.
- ✓ **Thumbnail/Info Setting:** This menu item gives you access to options that control certain aspects of the shooting and playback displays. See the earlier section “Monitor Matters: Customizing the Shooting Display” for details about the shooting display; Chapter 4 covers playback display choices.





**Figure 1-35:** Press the up- or down-arrow key to scroll through the three screens of options.

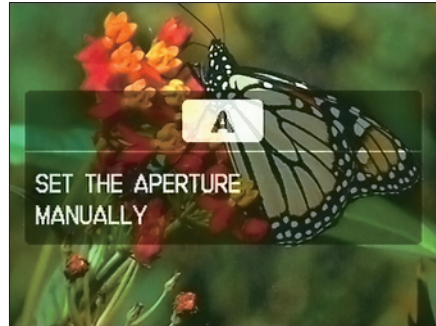
- ✓ **Control Setting:** Use this option to enable or disable the Live Guide, Live Control, and Super Control Panel (SCP) displays. The earlier section “Monitoring and Adjusting Photography Settings” explains.
- ✓ **EVF Adjust:** If you attach the optional electronic viewfinder, you can use this feature to adjust the display brightness and color temperature. Otherwise it’s dimmed in the menu and unavailable, as in Figure 1-35. Refer to my comments about the related control for adjusting the monitor, in the preceding section, to find out more about this setting and why I suggest you ignore it.
- ✓ **Backlit LCD:** By default, the monitor display dims slightly after an 8-second period of activity to save battery power. If you want to adjust this timing, visit this menu option. You can increase the automatic dimming delay to 30 seconds or one minute. Or you can disable the dimming feature entirely by choosing the Hold setting.

- Mode Guide:** By default, the camera displays a message similar to the one you see in Figure 1-36 every time you change the camera Mode dial to a new setting. The idea is to provide you with a hint as to the purpose of the mode. You dismiss the screen by pressing the shutter button halfway.

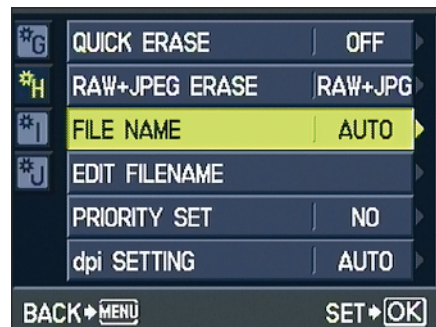
The reminder screens are helpful when you're first exploring the camera, but after you understand what each mode does, you may prefer to disable them by setting the Mode Guide menu option to Off.

- Beep:** When you use autofocus and press the shutter button halfway, the camera emits a little beep to let you know that it was successful in locking focus. The option that controls the beep is indicated on the menu with a little speaker icon (refer to the third screen in Figure 1-35). To silence the beep, set this menu option to Off.
- Volume:** This setting controls the default volume of the camera's internal speakers. (The circle of tiny holes on the camera back lead to that speaker.) When you play a movie, slide show, or still picture that has audio, you can adjust volume by pressing the up- or down-arrow key. See Chapter 4 for more about playback and slide shows; and see Chapter 9 to find out how to annotate a still photo with an audio clip.

Custom Menu H, as shown in Figure 1-37, contains one additional critical setup option, File Name. This option controls how file numbers are assigned to pictures. By default, the camera assigns each picture file a number — your first picture is P1000001.jpg, your second picture, P1000002.jpg, and so on. (Chapter 4 decodes the rest of the filename characters.) Even if you turn off the camera or replace the memory card, the camera remembers where the numbering scheme left off and assigns the next available number to your next picture. If you change the File Name option from the default setting,



**Figure 1-36:** Press the shutter button halfway to dismiss these screens; set the Mode Guide option to Off to disable them altogether.



**Figure 1-37:** Leave this option set to Auto so you don't wind up with multiple images that have the same filename.

Auto, to Off, the camera restarts the numbering sequence at P100001.jpg every time you insert a new memory card (or, if the card contains images, at the next available number). Obviously, that setup can lead to multiple pictures having the same file number, which can cause problems when you download the pictures to your computer. So keep this option set to Auto. See Chapter 10 for details on the related option, Edit Filename, which lets you customize the first few characters of filenames.

### Restoring default settings

For the iAuto and SCN modes, the camera automatically restores the factory default settings for critical shooting options as soon as you choose a different shooting mode or turn off the camera. You can restore the defaults for other modes by setting the Mode dial to P, A, S, or M and then visiting Shooting Menu 1. Select Custom Reset, press OK, and then select Reset, as shown in Figure 1-38. Through this option, you can restore most — but not all — of the default picture-taking settings.



In either case, basic camera settings, such as those on the Custom menu or Setup menu, are unaffected. If you want to return all settings to their factory defaults, you need to go through each menu item individually. A chart in the back of the camera manual lists the default setting for each option.



**Figure 1-38:** To access the Custom Reset option, first set the Mode dial to P, A, S, or M.

Chapter 10 explains how to use the other two to reset options, Reset 1 and Reset 2, to create and maintain your own set of camera defaults.

