Navigating the Canon EOS-1Ds Mark III

The object of this chapter is to answer the initial questions you would have regarding how to operate the main controls of the camera, learn about new changes to the 1Ds Mark III system, and quickly gain the ability to begin operating the camera confidently and professionally.

The 1Ds Mark III (along with the 1D Mark III) has a number of features that are new to the 1Ds/1D series. I'll describe some of these, as well as offer a road map identifying and explaining all the buttons and dials on the camera beyond the obvious ones, such as the Menu Light button and the Shutter button.

The 1Ds Mark III continues to use a control system that usually combines pressing a button with turning one of the two control dials on the camera. Once you learn and understand this system, it becomes an interface that’s easy and fast to work with.

What’s New at a Glance

Although a revolutionary new camera design is often more exciting initially, there’s something to be said for the evolutionary approach Canon has taken in designing new generations of the 1Ds-series cameras. Canon’s designers and engineers have methodically been updating the EOS-1Ds series (along with the EOS-1D series) through three generations,
each time making the cameras better and easier to navigate, with larger file sizes, less digital noise, and more options.

Aside from the many subtle improvements and the larger 21.1 effective megapixels sensor compared to the 1Ds Mark II, here are some of the major changes you’ll discover as you explore the 1Ds Mark III:

✦ **Additional autofocus points.**
Autofocus points have increased from 7 to 19 cross-type sensors for enhanced focusing sensitivity, retaining a total of 45 focus points.

✦ **New Multi-controller.** Located on the rear of the body, this serves various functions from choosing focus points to navigating various settings.

✦ **Dual Digic III Image Processor.**
The move from the Digic II processor has increased processing speed, as well improved image tonality with better detail and color reproduction.

Later generations of Canon cameras, including the 21.1-megapixel 5D Mark II, are now utilizing the Digic IV processor with visibly better high-ISO low-noise characteristics.

✦ **Self-cleaning sensor.** I find this a huge step up from the 1Ds Mark II. The sensor automatically cleans itself whenever the camera is turned on or off, utilizing ultrasonic vibration to shake dust off the infrared absorption glass — the outermost layer in front of the sensor. You can activate this cleaning manually, and in the rare times that dust remains despite the cleaning cycle, you can append Dust Delete data to an image in order to automatically remove dust in Canon’s DPP software.

See Appendix A for more information about maintaining the 1Ds Mark III.

While I often had to clean the sensor as well as remove dust on images captured in earlier 1Ds models, I’ve yet to do either with the 1Ds Mark III.

✦ **New mode — Highlight Priority.**
This new menu setting that nicely improves highlight details and tonal transitions.

✦ **Extended battery life.** The new lithium-ion battery seems to shoot forever, and is rated to 1,700 exposures.

✦ **Live View.** This new feature allows you to view the scene live on the rear LCD and take the photo. This also allows a live view on a computer screen when tethered by a USB cable to your computer.

✦ **Improved Playback.** Playback quality is better on the rear LCD in my opinion, which has been enlarged from 2 inches to 3 inches, with seven brightness levels to choose from.

✦ **Improved image richness.** Image capture has gone from 12 bit to 14 bit; this brings the richness of the imagery much closer to the 16-bit digital backs, particularly at ISO 100 to 400.

✦ **Increased continuous shooting (burst buffer).** The number of images the camera can capture before slowing down has increased from 32 Large/Fine JPEGs to 56, or 10 RAW frames. In my work, it’s rare when I’ve had to wait on the 1Ds Mark III to shoot the next image.
Navigating the Camera: Buttons and Dials

To get you up to speed navigating the 1Ds Mark III buttons and dials, one thing you want to learn right away is the difference between the Main Control dial and the Quick Control dial — it’s easy to get them confused. The Main Control dial is the small dial just behind the Shutter button on the top of the camera. The Quick Control dial is the large

Better menu access organization. The Menu system now utilizes better organization for easier navigation and thus faster selection of menu choices.

Improved tethered shooting. This has gone from a FireWire to USB 2.0 connection, which is one area that I consider a drawback, at least if you tether using a Mac.

Cross-Reference

In Chapter 4, you’ll find more detailed information as well as workarounds to tethering problems.
dial located on the back of the camera. Canon uses the symbols shown in figures 1.2 and 1.3 for each dial in the manual, so get to know them.

The settings described in the following sections are the combinations of buttons and a particular control dial typically used; however, you can choose which dials to use for particular functions within the Custom Functions menu page. This overview is your principle introduction to the controls of the 1Ds Mark III.

**Top of the camera**

The controls on top of the 1Ds Mark III are arranged in familiar order for those who have experience with either the 1D or 1Ds series. What follow are details on how the controls work in conjunction with either the Main Control dial or Quick Control dial.

**Mode button**

Located at the top-left corner of the camera, the Mode button allows you to choose which exposure value (either aperture or shutter) you want to set and which exposure value the camera will automatically set.

Press the Mode button and turn either control dial to choose your preferred setting:

- **A (Aperture Priority).** You set the aperture while the camera sets the shutter.

- **M (Manual).** You set both shutter and aperture values.

- **Tv, or time value (Shutter Priority).** You set the shutter while the camera sets the aperture.

- **Bulb.** You set the aperture, and the shutter remains opened with sensor exposed as long as the Shutter button is pressed or locked in place with a cable release. You should use a cable release with the Bulb mode setting. Seconds and minutes can be read from the top LCD. Be sure to shut the rear eyepiece in these scenarios, as well as raise the mirror before beginning.

These control operations are designed very well — it’s harder to describe them than to actually use them. Once you learn how the control system works and where the controls are located, for the most part, settings can be made quickly and easily and without a lot of thinking, meaning the system gets out of the way of shooting.

**AF-Drive button**

The AF-Drive button, located just below the Mode button, allows you to control various ways that autofocus can be set to work, as well as how the motor drive works. You press the AF-Drive button while turning either the Main Control or Quick Control dial.
With the Quick Control dial. This controls the motor drive, allowing you to choose between Silent mode, single exposure, slow continuous motor drive, and fast continuous motor drive.

Tip: Silent mode is a particularly useful mode in quiet or sensitive locations, and one that many photographers forget about. It is useful inside places of worship, with sensitive subjects, at high-pressure focused board meetings, and so on.

With the Main Control dial. This controls focus, allowing you to choose between One-shot and AI focus mode. One-shot focus mode chooses and locks the focus once the Shutter button is pressed halfway. AI focus mode continuously checks the focus of the chosen focus point (or the automatically chosen focus point) and adjusts continuously as the camera-to-subject distance changes.
Using the AF-Drive and Mode button together

By pressing the AF-Drive button and the Mode button and holding (or pressing and then releasing these two buttons but beginning within six seconds), you can turn either the Main Control dial or Quick Control dial to set auto-exposure bracketing, which is initially set for three images. You can bracket from plus or minus 1/3 stop to plus or minus 3 stops. The exposures are initially taken in this sequence: prime exposure, under-exposed, over-exposed.

Tip
You can control the number of exposures and the exposure sequence with Menu Page 6, Custom Function 1, Items 5 and 6.

Metering Mode/Flash Exposure Compensation button

Depending on which control dial you turn while pressing this button, you can make your choice for the metering type you want, as well as for the Flash Exposure Compensation you want — that is, how much under or over the initial setting you want flash exposure to be.

✦ With the Main Control dial. Press the Metering Mode/Flash Exposure Compensation button and turn the Main Control dial to choose between Evaluative Metering, Partial Metering, Spot Metering, and Center Weighted Average metering.

✦ With the Quick Control dial. Adjust exposure compensation for EOS flash, from –3 to +3 EV.

Exposure Compensation/Aperture button

With either control dial, this button, which is located on the top right of the camera, sets exposure compensation, if desired, from –3 to +3 stops. However, I much prefer to set the Quick Control dial to perform the same function (Custom Function IV, Item 3, Choice 0).

ISO button

Located on the top-right corner of the camera above the Shutter button, the ISO button allows you to set the ISO by turning either the Main Control or Quick Control dial. You can set ISO between 100 and 3200.

Main Control dial

Located on the top right corner between the Shutter button and the ISO button, when used by itself, the Main Control dial controls whatever mode you’ve set with the Mode button. For example, if you set the camera to A (Aperture Priority), the dial controls the aperture. If you set it to Tv (Shutter Priority), the dial controls the shutter speed.

As noted, the Main Control dial is used in conjunction with buttons that you press to obtain the settings you want.

FE Lock/Multi-Spot metering button

The Flash Exposure Lock, or FEL, button works in conjunction with EX Series Speedlites. It’s used to lock the flash exposure at the desired point of the subject. Pressing the FEL button activates a preflash, after which you take the picture along with a second flash burst. This method provides a more accurate flash exposure, although at the risk of being less spontaneous.

Back of the camera

The back of the camera contains both buttons, 2 LCD screens, and the memory card storage area. Once you learn the location of
the buttons and practice a bit, you’ll find it’s a system that is designed to respond quickly to your shooting needs.

**Menu button**

Located at the top-left corner of the back of the camera, pressing the Menu button accesses the menu system, which you control by using the control dials. Here’s how it works:

- **With the Main Control dial.** You’re able to choose from the nine menu screens.
- **With the Quick Control dial.** You’re able to choose a subject line within a single menu screen.
- **With the Quick Control Set button** (located in the center of the Quick Control Set button). You’re able to select one item within a single line on a single menu screen.
Info button
Located next to the Menu button, the Info button controls what sort of information you view. Pressed by itself, basic user settings display on the rear LCD screen, including color space, Picture Style, shots remaining on each card, and date and time. If you press it after pressing the Playback button, four options become available for viewing image playback on the rear LCD screen.

- **Full frame.** The image fills the LCD frame, and above the image aperture, shutter speed, file number, and card number information are displayed.
- **Full frame with file information.** Image type (RAW or JPEG and the size of the JPEG is) and file name are superimposed over the image.
- **Smaller image with histogram.** A smaller playback image appears next to a luminance histogram. Below this, many details are displayed: Exposure mode, Metering mode, Picture Style, color space, date, and sequence number.
- **Smaller image with RGB histograms.** A smaller playback image appears next to three RGB histograms, one per color, as well as file type and sequence number.

AE Lock/Reduce button
Located to the right of the AF-ON button, this button has two functions, depending on whether you’re photographing or playing back images.

- **During shooting.** AE (auto-exposure) Lock button. After pressing the Shutter button halfway, pressing this button locks exposure, allowing you to recompose your shot and maintain the same exposure.
- **During playback.** Pressing this button reduces the image size in playback, all the way to a multiple-image contact sheet view.

AF Point Selection/Magnify button
Like its companion (the AE Lock/Reduce button) button, this button has two functions, depending on the mode:

- **During shooting.** By turning the Main Control dial, this button allows you to choose individual focus points (although I greatly prefer the Quick Control dial or Multi-controller joystick for this). However, pressing this button along with turning the Quick Control dial also gives you the choice of complete autofocus (all focus points light up, indicating the camera will choose the focus point).
- **During playback.** Pressing this button enlarges playback images on the rear LCD from the smallest contact-sheet view (nine images at once) to the largest view of a single image at 100 percent magnification.

AF start button
Located on the top-right back of the camera, the AF start button (which appears as AF-ON) initiates autofocus without changing any other values.
**Multi-controller**

Located above the Quick Control dial, the Multi-controller joystick claims a range of functions:

- Pressing the controller directly down the Center focus point is chosen
- Quickly selects any of the 19 user-selectable focus points, as long as you have the latest firmware, 1.1.2 or higher.
- Sets custom white balance shift navigating to Menu 1, and pressing Item 3
- Scrolls the image during magnified Playback LCD view
- Scrolls the image during magnified Live View shooting

**Playback button**

The Playback button, designated by a blue arrow and located beneath the large rear LCD, is used to control playback of images. It’s used in conjunction with the following:

- The Quick Control dial to move backward and forward between images
- The Info button to choose the playback information you want to see
- The AE Lock/Reduce button and the and the AF Point Selection/Magnify buttons to move from contact sheet view to extreme close-up view; for example, to change the viewing size of the images in Playback mode

**Erase button**

During image playback you can use the Erase button along with the Quick Control dial to choose the Cancel or Erase option, and then press the Set button in the center of the Quick Control dial to erase an image. This is an intentional two-step process to ensure that you do, in fact, want to erase a particular image.

**Function button**

Located to the right of the Erase button, the Function button is a quick way to control the Compact Flash and SD cards.
With the Main Control dial. The Function button chooses which card you want to be shooting to and viewing from, assuming two cards are loaded in the camera.

With the Quick Control dial. The Function button chooses what file type the chosen card is creating, in terms of size and the choice of JPEG or RAW — from small JPEG all the way to full-size RAW. You can also control these functions within the menu system; however, this is a fast way to work, once you learn to use it.

Bottom-right buttons
These three buttons function the same way as their counterparts on top of the camera, and can be used when shooting in vertical mode, if desired.

Side connections
The left side of the camera contains output ports for connecting the 1Ds Mark III to external devices. Four ports are protected by upper and lower rubber covers, and one is protected by a screw cap. The upper rubber cover protects camera and strobe connections. The lower cover protects video and computer ports. The screw cap protects the output for the WFE2 remote transmitter.

Note Be careful to tightly fit these covers in place when not in use.

If you format the card, all images are erased, whether or not they are locked.

While pressing the Playback button, if you press the Sound Recording button and hold it for three seconds, it allows you to make sound recording notations (up to 30 seconds) for the image. This is done by creating a WAV audio file with the same filename as the image file.

1.6 Side view of the Canon EOS 1Ds-Mark III with covers on
**Port 1: PC terminal.** This is used to sync to an external strobe.

**Port 2: Remote terminal.** This is used to connect with any N3 terminal Canon accessory, such as a remote cable release RS-80N3.

**Port 3: Video Out terminal.** This output allows playback of images on a TV screen.

The Video Output can be set in menus either to NTSC (U.S.) or PAL (European) signals on Setup Menu III 2, Line 4 (Video System).

**Port 4: Digital terminal.** The Digital terminal sends an output signal that serves two purposes:

- You can connect to any Canon printer that supports PictBridge for printing images directly from the camera.
- More importantly for professionals, this is the output that tethers to computers — either to download cards or to capture and display incoming images straight to the computer.

See Chapter 4 for more information on tethered shooting.

**Extension System terminal.** This is for mounting a WFT-E2A wireless transmitter, for wireless transmission of images.

So far, most people I know who have bought a WFT-E2A wireless transmitter are not satisfied. The word is that it’s not quite ready for prime time.
Setting up Memory Cards

The Memory Card slot cover is located on the far-right side of the camera back. The cover is opened with a counter-clockwise turn of the latch, which is located next to the Off-On switch.

There are two slots for card insertion: on the left is a CompactFlash (CF) slot, and on the right is a Secure Digital (SD) slot. You can assign any type or size of file to either card, as well as choose to use the cards sequentially (when the first card is full, the second begins to record) or simultaneously (to back each other up).

The 1Ds Mark III also allows the use of the newer Ultra Direct Memory Access (UDMA) CF cards. Using these cards, the writing speed is three times as fast as the 1Ds Mark II, even though the pixel count has gone from 16.7 to 21.1 megapixels.

Note: Microdrives also work in the CF slot; however, they are slower and not recommended for use when using the Live View function.

Types of files

The Canon EOS-1Ds Mark III can record both RAW and JPEG files. Each file type has several variations, as noted in the following sections.

RAW and sRAW files

As you probably know, RAW files contain the advantage over JPEGs of containing non-compressed imagery with full color-range capture. Most professionals prefer to shoot RAW on assignment due to the potentially
higher image quality, as well as the opportunity to fine-tune image data in post-processing that might not be chosen during JPEG capture, particularly color temperature range. However, by shooting in RAW, you must convert to another file type in post to use the file either online or in print.

New to RAW capture with the 1Ds series is sRAW, a file type that contains the same uncompressed RAW qualities but is smaller in size — approximately 6 x 9 inches at 300 dpi (14.5MB) compared to a full RAW capture of approximately 12.5 x 19 inches at 300 dpi (25MB). Thus, you can capture many more RAW files to a card if you don’t require the full RAW size.

Although DPP reads sRAW files, many other RAW processors do not read the sRAW format. The one time I used sRAW, the client changed their mind about the file sizes they needed, going from small files to huge files. Since then, I rarely use sRAW.

### JPEG files

JPEG files are compressed files with color temperature chosen at the time of capture. The 1Ds Mark III offers four JPEG file sizes, as compared to the two file sizes available with RAW capture. All the image file formats available with the camera are listed in Table 1.1.

The 1Ds Mark III JPEGs are exceptionally good, and, depending on the subject, it’s often difficult to tell the difference between JPEG and RAW file captures. I find JPEGs adequate for scouting or informal shooting, although I still prefer shooting RAW for most of my work — you never know when you’ll capture a strong image and want to print big or perhaps license for stock sales. JPEG files are still lossy files, meaning some data is always lost. Due to that fact and the extra control one has in post-production with RAW files, RAW files tend to be the file of choice for professionals in most situations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Image Size</th>
<th>Pixels</th>
<th>Print Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RAW</td>
<td>Approximately 21.0 megapixels (5616 x 3744 pixels)</td>
<td>A2 or larger (16.5 x 23.4 in.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sRAW</td>
<td>Approximately 5.2 megapixels (2784 x 1856 pixels)</td>
<td>Approximately A4 (8.3 x 11.7 in.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large JPEG</td>
<td>Approximately 21 megapixels (5616 x 3744 pixels)</td>
<td>A2 or larger (16.5 x 23.4 in.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M1 JPEG</td>
<td>Approximately 16.6 megapixels (4992 x 3328 pixels)</td>
<td>Approximately A2 (16.5 x 23.4 in.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M2 JPEG</td>
<td>Approximately 11.0 megapixels (4080 x 2720 pixels)</td>
<td>Approximately A3 (11.7 x 16.5 in.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small JPEG</td>
<td>Approximately 5.2 megapixels (2784 x 1856 pixels)</td>
<td>Approximately A4 (8.3 x 11.7 in.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the past, one great disadvantage of JPEGs was the inability to easily change color temperature or hue. Now many of the newer software processors, such as Adobe Lightroom 2 and Apple Aperture 2, allow you to apply the same color temperature sliders to JPEGs as you do to RAW images. However, keep in mind that a large amount of the available color information hasn’t been captured shooting JPEG, and so the color range is limited.

I’m happy to report that only the functions being used light up; thus, it’s actually a clean and fast system to read. In my typical setup, I see the Exposure mode indicator, shutter speed, a plus sign indicating exposure compensation is on, shots remaining on the card currently being used, and ISO.

On the right side of the viewfinder is a vertical readout. This includes a scale that reads out exposure compensation on the right and flash compensation on the left. Below that is a number indicating maximum capture bursts available at any one time. Set to RAW with Noise Reduction turned off, this would read 10 to begin with. Below that is an indicator revealing what shooting mode you’re in, taking both cards into consideration if two cards are inserted. Thus you might see RAW twice, JPEG and RAW (indicating each card is writing a different file type) or JPEG twice.

At the bottom of the right-side readout is the battery level indicator. If the battery icon is filled with stripes, the battery is at 100–70 percent, three stripes indicates battery level above 50 percent, two stripes 49–20 percent, and one stripe 19–10 percent. One stripe flashing indicates the battery will be exhausted soon and that it is a good time to exchange with a fresh battery and recharge the one just used. No stripes with the battery icon flashing is the official recharge warning, although I personally don’t like to take the battery that low.

Viewfinder Readout

The viewfinder of the 1Ds Mark III represents a major advance over the 1Ds Mark II. It provides the highest magnification and widest coverage of the EOS-1 series cameras to date, including film cameras, and accomplishes this along with 100 percent coverage. The bottom line is that it’s a pleasure to compose through.

There are many data readouts on view within the viewfinder, although they don’t intrude on your concentration when shooting — if you need them, you have them. The main readouts are along a bottom horizontal row.

Starting from the left side, you can check Metering mode, Exposure mode, Flash Exposure information, High-Speed Sync indicator, FE (flash exposure) Lock, flash exposure bracketing in progress, shutter and aperture values, exposure compensation, white balance compensation, shots remaining, ISO speed, and the focus confirmation light.

Be careful when shooting images with subtle gradations with the JPEG format, such as skies or seamless backgrounds with graduated exposure lighting on them. This is where you’ll most quickly encounter visible and unwanted JPEG compression due to the ‘lossy’ nature of JPEG capture.

Also available for evaluation on the camera-top LCD are shutter speed, aperture, metering mode, exposure mode, flash mode, regular and flash compensation, one-shot or AI continuous focus mode, and shooting mode (silent, single shot, low-speed continuous, or high-speed continuous motor drive).
1.10 All possible information available in the viewfinder display
Live View

The 1Ds Mark III uses its own flavor of Live View, along with the 1D Mark III, the 40D, 50D, and 5D Mark II. Live View allows real-time viewing of the image, either on the rear LCD screen or on a computer video display when the camera is tethered by USB cable to the computer with EOS Utility active.

Advantages of Live View

Live View offers several advantages and opportunities, including the following:

- Live View makes it possible to place the camera in positions where normally it would be difficult, if not impossible, to view the image through the eyepiece; now you can view either on the rear LCD or on a computer screen.

Challenges of using Live View

Live View also presents a few challenges on the 1Ds Mark III:

- Autofocus is disabled when using Live View; however, using the Point Selection/Magnify button, you can zoom in on the image and focus for precise adjustment. You can also use the Multi-controller joystick for moving around the image.
Activating Live View

Follow these steps for activating Live View:

1. **Be sure to switch the Auto/Manual focus switch on the lens in use to Manual.**

2. **Navigate to the Live View function settings options in the Set-up 2 menu.** Navigation of the camera menus is discussed in Chapter 2.

3. **Choose to Enable Live View,** You can also turn the Grid Display On or Off from here, if desired.

4. **Once Live View is enabled,** press the Quick Control Dial Set button **Control dial the Live View image on the rear LCD.** You do not have to turn the Live View Enable function off when not using Live View; just don’t press the Quick Control Set button. The button remains set to enable live view whenever you press it.

**Tip**

Some photographers value and use this function to carefully check focus when shooting groups of people with the camera mounted on a tripod. Using Live View, you can keep the composition locked while simultaneously zooming in on the Live View image, using the Multi-controller joystick to move about the image and check focus on each individual in the frame.

- Due to the extra heat generated by the rear LCD being on, there’s the possibility of noise being generated during Live View. Although not a problem during initial exposure sequences, Canon recommends shooting no more than 300 images at 73°F/23°C or 230 images at 32°F/0°C.

- Hard disk-type microdrive cards are not recommended using Live View. Solid-state CF and SD cards are fine.

- Live View should be turned off if you are shooting long exposures.

- You should not point the camera at the sun while using Live View or you might damage the sensor.

**Note**

For more information on Live View, refer to pages 109-114 of the Canon EOS-1Ds Mark III owner’s manual.