

Approach to Buying a New Camera and When is the time for an Upgrade..

Warning!! Warning!! This blog is longer than the usual length.

For folks who had a long day at work, folks who are already feeling tired and sleepy...stressed and depressed..

Rest your body and mind...Read this blog later when your senses are fresh..

Here we begin..

With new models from different manufacturers rolling out every other month, the aspiring photographer is overwhelmed with the varieties and it is an ordeal to choose the one that will aid you in your photography endeavor.

Before we explore the multiple approaches to decide which one is your 1st camera, let's understand what is that you are actually buying when you buy the camera gear.

Though the word "Camera" sounds Singular it includes if not all but many of the components listed below:

1. Camera body.
2. Lens
3. On-board Flash
4. Data card/s
5. Cables
6. Manual

and common accessorizes...

1. Lens filters (UV/ND/Polarizing)
2. External Flash
3. Diffusers on the flash
4. Tripod
5. Screen guard

All these together make the "camera gear"; the tools which you will use to achieve images the way you visualized them.

Do note that for achieving a different perspective or while trying a different genre of photography you might have to change one or many of the components.

Which also means that **if you think of achieving every type of photography with a single gear..that's not happening..be ready to accept compromises if you are going down this path.**

If one tries to do everything it does n't do anything right.

But, if not everything, gears can do multiple things right and these come at a premium price.

Manufacturers usually release a Camera model in various kit versions.

- a. Camera body alone
- b. Kit – I = Camera body+Standard zoom(18-55mm)
- c. Kit - II = Camera body+Standard zoom+Telephoto zoom
- d. Kit – III = Camera body+All purpose lens (18-135/18-140)

Pricing of each kit version differs and to entice and confuse you further, there are amazing combi offers.

Cameras can also be categorized based on the skill set levels.

There are various approaches to figuring out your gear..before that let us factor the control elements:

- a. Budget.
- b. What kind of photography you aim to pursue.
- c. How long is it going to take reach your goal , in other words; how much time you are willing to invest in practicing.

The first 2 (a and b) elements are counter-active and so are c and d.

You might want to pursue a particular genre of photography but do not have the budget to procure the required camera gear..

and/or

You might want to pursue a particular genre of photography but do not invest time in practicing.

In both the above situations, do not invest in your camera. Instead continue saving and revisit these factors later and check if any/all of them have changed for the better.

And you actually do not need high-end camera gear unless:

- 1. You want to pursue photography at a seriously professional level.
- 2. You are seriously passionate and aim to shoot images of high quality even at a personal level.
- 3. You are the “One” with access to unending funds.

What differentiates a Professional Photographer from the Amazing Photographer is that the Professional Photographer earns out of his photography skills. Both of them have almost the same photography skillsets.

Let us understand the common mistake we commit due to budget constraints.

We are prone to:

- a. investing in gears with lower features but still expect benefits that it can't deliver.
- b. investing in substandard accessories.

Let us dwell on:

Scenario 1:

If you had a model with price X with 8 features of which 5 will definitely aid you. There is this other model with price Y (more than X) with 12 great features but if you will be using just 6 of them..which model would you choose.

Unless you have decided to learn and up-skill and will eventually use all of the 12 features do not invest in the "other model with price Y".

Scenario 2:

The release time of the model plays a role as well. If a camera model has been around for quite some time, the price comes down a bit. Further price reduction occurs when the model is upgraded with a new release and there could be some very enticing offers of the old model with lens combo.

If you are able to practice a lot and quite serious in your pursuit, there is good chance that you will grow out of the current gear sooner than planned. In this case, the current gear no longer adequately supports you due to technical/feature limitations and you will be left longing for an upgrade but won't have enough budget as you have just completed paying out the EMI for the 1st investment.

The best approach would be:

Think well about what kind of photography you wish to pursue now and in the future.
Think about the level you are at today and what level you would want to get to.
Think about how much time you are willing to invest to learn, practice and hone your skills.

Your camera gear should match up to these expectations. If you have figured out the Dream Camera Gear that would help achieve your expectations, Congrats!!
But if you do not have the budget for it...then please hide your credit cards and continue saving.

Does that mean anyone with a budget constraint can't do photography; your plan could be one of the below:

- a. Buying a **Standard Camera** (w/ **few** good features) with a very **Strong Lens** (w/ **many** but not all features).
- b. Buying a **Strong Camera** (w/ **many** but not all features) with a **Standard Lens** (w/**few** good features).

And your future path will be:

If you choose option "a", you might have to think about upgrading your Camera sooner or later when your skill is no longer supported by the features of the Standard Camera.

If you choose the option "b", you will continue to save and invest to build your lens line up. Over a period of time your camera gear would get strong overall.

Do note I said "many" and not "all".

It means you can't expect all the cameras and lenses to have all amazing features in a budget price. But the right combination of the camera and lens can definitely make a strong camera gear.

And you don't have to own all the components in your gear. You should explore the option to not only rent out lenses and/or accessories but even high-end cameras to learn and experience its features.

Ponder over this option even while you are considering an upgrade.