

Panasonic 3D1 camera

The Panasonic Lumix 3D1 camera was introduced in 2012. Unfortunately, it is not available any more and used cameras that surface on ebay are very expensive. If you get a chance to buy one, don't skip it, it is a very good camera.

I have covered this camera in two *Stereogram Tutorials*: 1) First look: 16.7 (Mar. 2012), 2) Second look: 17.03 (Nov. 2012) plus several Workshops presented at NSA and elsewhere.

The Table below summarizes the strong and weak points of the camera. This camera replaced the Fuji 3D camera

as a general purpose camera for me. If I can only take one camera (in addition to my phone), this is it.

With the 30mm lens spacing and image stabilization, this camera works well for close-ups. I have installed a mirror attachment to this camera (**Fig. 1**). By using the mirror I am able to compose better at lower angles, take 3D selfies, etc. **Fig. 2** shows some examples.

Despite the many good things about the camera, I am having a couple of issues:

- **I cannot take action photos.** Because the camera is fully automatic in 3D, I cannot select a higher shutter speed at

the expense of ISO. At lower light, the camera selects a slow shutter speed (1/50s, not good for action). The automatic white balance is also a problem when shooting in warm light/colors (it tries to neutralize them).

- I have found that shooting against bright light results in hazy pictures as if the lenses are not clear. I have seen this in many cameras but not all. The lenses look clear so I am not sure why this is happening. As it is, I cannot shoot with a bright light into the picture.

Despite these issues, this camera is still my first choice.

Panasonic Lumix 3D1 at a glance

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| + Good image quality | - Limited exposure control |
| + Image stabilization | - Auto mode in 3D (no choice) |
| + Wide angle focal length | - Flash between lenses |
| + Well-suited for close-ups | - Narrow base for general 3D |
| + Good battery performance | - No 3D display |
| + Compact & easy to use | - Prone to lens flare |



Fig 1: The Panasonic 3D1 is a fine little 3D camera with a stereo base of 30mm. Because of the smaller than normal lens spacing, it is best suited for close-ups. The camera is compact and easy to carry and has good stabilization. This is the camera that I take if I can only take one 3D camera with me. The only issues for me is that in 3D mode it is fully automatic and I cannot select a certain shutter speed or ISO. This can lead to blurred action pictures. Also, the lens seems hazy when shooting against strong light.

An accessory that makes this camera even more useful is a **mirror attachment** called ViewPlayer. You can use this mirror in 5 different ways: 1) When closed, it protects the screen (a weak point of the camera). 2) In the z-position you can take selfies. 3) In the flip-down position you can shoot from a lower angle. 4) In the flip-up position you can shoot from a higher angle or use it to block the sun. 5) In the L-position it serves as a stand. The mirror helps compose the pictures more accurately. Without it, it is hit or miss.



Fig 2: Examples of stereo pictures with the Panasonic 3D1 camera. Left: Typical selfie. Right: Picture of Vinny taken from eye level, or even lower. This composition is more pleasing than looking down. I used the mirror attachments in both cases, to frame the pictures properly.