

# iPhone vs. DSLR/Mirrorless Cameras – Which Should You Buy?

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Many people still debate whether or not a DSLR or mirrorless cameras are still worth getting while iPhone cameras are improving so much. Since there are many differences between the two, it's good to know what to look for before deciding.

## Image Quality

DSLR/mirrorless (I'll mention only DSLR cameras from now on, but I mean both DSLR and mirrorless since they have similar benefits and drawbacks) cameras have much better image quality when compared to iPhones. At first glance, iPhone photos may look great on a small screen, but if you enlarge the pictures and compare them with DSLR photos, you'll see a clear difference. Colors are more accurate with DSLR cameras, and much more detail is retained in the image because it has a higher resolution and image sensor to capture the detail.

iPhones can automatically process a picture (computational photography) to make an image look great, but the overall quality is lower on an iPhone than on a DSLR camera. Of course, it still matters if you use a DSLR camera correctly to get a better image than an iPhone. You can also enhance the image further if you shoot photos in RAW format and edit the image (more about that below).

## **Background Blur (Bokeh)**

Background blur, or bokeh, happens when you take a photo while focusing on a foreground subject with a wide f-stop, which causes the background to be out of focus because of a low depth of field.

iPhones have some blurring when taking pictures of close-up objects, but it renders a fake blur to make it look similar for farther away subjects. The blur iPhones add isn't nearly the same as a natural bokeh effect from DSLR lenses.

Background blur/bokeh when using a DSLR lens is much better and natural, with a cleaner and smooth blur without any weird effects/artifacts around the outline of a subject.

## **Lenses**

Since the lenses on an iPhone are so small, it has its limitations of what's possible. iPhones are suitable for wide-angle and some zooming but aren't as natural-looking. There are only fixed lenses on iPhones, with no option to change them later.

DSLR cameras have lenses for all purposes and can zoom into subjects far better than iPhones. There are also various lenses for wide-angle landscapes, portraits, or adjustable zoom. Many lenses are made of quality glass, which can improve the clarity, color, and overall image.

## **Ease of Use**

Taking pictures on an iPhone is easy since you can point and shoot with them. On the other hand, DSLR cameras take some skill and learning if you want to get the most out of the camera. While iPhones are more accessible, learning how to use a DSLR camera can be a satisfying experience that can help you become a better photographer.

Go with an iPhone if you want something easy and don't care much about the quality or more control and flexibility over your photos. Otherwise, DSLR cameras are worth the extra effort since you'll get amazing-looking images.

## **Settings**

DSLR cameras have many more settings to adjust everything for creating an image you envision, which can add more flexibility than the iPhone camera app. There are designated buttons just for changing specific settings on a DSLR camera, making it easier to use and adjust than

everything on a touchscreen. With that said, some DSLR cameras now have touchscreens in addition to the physical buttons.

iPhones don't have many settings to change in the stock camera app, but some "pro" camera apps add some flexibility.

## **HDR (High Dynamic Range)**

An HDR image enhances the darks and balances the whites to create a colorful and balanced photo. Cell phones made HDR even more popular, with them able to do it quickly. iPhones can automatically take HDR images by taking many pictures and then combining the bright and dark images into one.

DSLR cameras have some automatic HDR features or can be manually done, but that's sometimes not as easy. If you want a similar experience and quickness, it's best to get a DSLR camera with the highest dynamic range.

Dynamic range is the maximum range between dark and light, so the higher the dynamic range means it can capture a broader range of the two extremes. If you capture a picture on a camera with a high dynamic range and use RAW format, you will have the flexibility to edit the image later without many limits.

## **Batteries**

Taking pictures on an iPhone can cause a lot of wear and tear on the battery over time. If you don't have access to charging your phone while taking many pictures or videos, it can also become an inconvenience.

DSLR cameras have replaceable batteries, so you don't have to worry about wearing out the battery without being able to get another one. It can also be easier to charge DSLR batteries since you can have multiple batteries to swap out, so you can take pictures freely while an extra battery is charging for use later.