

HAVE FUN WITH DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY ONLINE

I should've known she was up to something when I saw her hesitate at the end of the office-supply aisle. There she stood, partially blocking my turn with her cart. She wore a denim jumper and a look of determination. "I see you're buying floppy disks," she began, eyeing my blue handbasket, "and was wondering if you could answer a computer question. My son has a new baby—my fifth grandchild—and he lives three states away. I thought if I could figure out my computer, he could send me pictures over the wires."

I smiled at her description, and tried to explain as simply as possible how the process works. "It's easy to build a website, and once your son's pictures are online, he will need to send you the URL. An URL is like an address that tells you where to find your grandbaby's website." She seemed satisfied with my explanation, thanked me, and hurried out the door.

New-baby websites are cropping up faster than an obstetrician can say, "Meet me at the hospital." Webmasters can either scan ordinary photos for uploading to the site, or choose from a wide array of digital cameras. (If ever you've experienced the loss of a roll of film through one of the photo developing outlets, a digital camera makes an attractive option.) Digital cameras don't require film, and offer a quick, easy way for new parents to announce the arrival of their baby to long-distance friends and relatives. They're also an excellent option for grandmothers like me, who wish to create the electronic version of the classic SOGPIP – Silly Old Grandma, Pictures in Purse. Just click, upload to a website you've prepared especially for Baby's arrival, and brag online to your heart's content.

Students will love the speed and flexibility of digital photography. Say, for instance, your child is planning a school report about the oldest building in town. He could arrange an interview with an old-timer who remembers the building, collect historic newspaper clippings through a library microfiche file, then visit the site himself and snap a few pictures with his digital camera—all in a day or two. Photos print out clear and sharp, and add a professional touch to any report.

If you're in the market for a digital camera, check out some comparison sites online. Consumer Search maintains a collection of product reviews. Their ranking is based on a thorough testing and evaluation, to provide recommendations of the best products and services related to digital photography. Visit them at <http://www.digicampage.com/>. Once you decide on a camera, you'll appreciate ShortCourses, a super site about digital photography at <http://www.shortcourses.com/>. There you'll find practical information: basic photography, creativity with lenses, how to upload pictures to the web, printing photographs, and much more. It receives over *four million* visitors per year!

The whole family will enjoy The Digital Learning Center <http://www.kodak.com/US/en/digital/dlc/>, a treasure chest of helpful tips, lessons, and creative ways to use digital photographs. Learn to create greeting cards, stickers, or

photo t-shirt transfers from your own photographs. This site a variety of unique projects, including how to make a sliding photo game on your website.

Digital photography is limited only by your creativity. Invest in a digicam soon and you'll be an old pro sooner than you think.