

## Getting Started in 3-D Photography by David Starkman & Susan Pinsky

Stereoscopic (or 3-D) photography is not new. The stereoscope (the viewer) was invented in 1838, and the first 2-lensed stereo camera was built in 1858. Commercially made 3-D cameras were popular in the 1920's and the 1950's. During those periods hundreds of thousands of 3-D cameras were made, sold, and used. In the scheme of things, however, this always represented just a tiny fraction of the photography market.

Today, thanks to the advantages that digital photography offers, 3-D photography that is digitally based is rapidly expanding in popularity. Although there are no commercially made digital 3-D cameras, hackers and small entrepreneurs have been putting together twin-camera rigs for doing digital 3-D photography. There is also extremely powerful FREE software now available for aligning and presenting the 3-D image pairs. Here is some information to get you started.

First, there is tons of information on the Internet. **Google key words** such as "Stereo Photography", "3-D Photography", "Stereo Photo Gallery", "3-D Photo Gallery" and you will find many, many websites offering information of all sorts.

Some good places to start are [www.stereoscopy.com](http://www.stereoscopy.com) for one of the best general 3-D information sites. Our own website [www.reel3d.com](http://www.reel3d.com) has links to many dealers and resources for 3-D. The National Stereoscopic Association is the best national organization for 3-D enthusiasts, and publishes a magazine called "Stereo World" and has a yearly convention in July. Their website is [www.stereoview.org](http://www.stereoview.org).

There is an international organization called the International Stereoscopic Union (ISU) which has a convention every other year, and publishes a journal. Their website is <http://www.isu3d.org/>

Since 1955 Los Angeles has had a 3-D photography club that meets monthly. Called the Stereo Club of Southern California (SCSC) it's website is [www.la3dclub.com](http://www.la3dclub.com). Check it out for meeting times and location, as well as online articles and information.

For a quick start tutorial on taking 3-D images with an ordinary single digital camera, see <http://3ddigitalphoto.com/make3d.asp> .

For FREE software to align digital 3-D images see StereoPhoto Maker (SPM) at: <http://stereo.jpn.org/eng/stphmkr/>

For FREE software ( StereoData Maker or SDM) that allows hacking into certain model Canon cameras to synchronize them for 3-D use, see <http://stereo.jpn.org/eng/sdm/index.htm>

For a site that makes ready-made USB shutter button assemblies for use with SDM software and Canon cameras see [www.digi-dat.de/produkte/index\\_eng.html#SDM](http://www.digi-dat.de/produkte/index_eng.html#SDM)

For a site that sells custom-made digital 3-D camera rigs, see [www.make3dimages.com](http://www.make3dimages.com)

The Stereo Division of the Photographic Society of America provides services and activities to both 2-D and stereo camera clubs. It offers more than 30 programs on the art of 3-D photography and publishes brochures listing stereo clubs and stereo bulletins. See: <http://www.psa-photo.org/default.asp?DivID=6&menuID=0&pageID=9>

So, you can see there is no shortage of information if you are willing to seek it out. If you live in the L.A. area, please consider coming to a monthly meeting of the SCSC. We're usually there, and it is a chance to see projected 3-D images at every meeting.

Last, see the other articles that are listed in the Stereo Club of Southern California website Library for more information.

*Sincerely,*

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