

AF-Micro-Nikkor 200 mm f/4 ED	5 (F4, F5) 5 (D2X) IR: 3 (DX: D200 modified)	<p>Much bigger than its MF forerunner in every respect: Size, weight, price, and optical quality. I consider this one of Nikon's premier lenses. However, I find it cumbersome to operate hand-held and its AF action is quite slow even on the F5. This is of little concern because only a fool or newbie would seriously consider using AF for doing close-up photography under field conditions (this is valid for any "macro" lens). Mounted on a tripod, it handles quite well, but manual focusing is much heavier than on the MF 200 and putting the focusing collar up front of the lens doesn't help either. Pictorial results are outstanding and this lens gives the proverbial razor-sharpness within its optimal range f/4-f/11. Stopping further down results in a significant softening of the image. It also flares less easily than the MF 200 lens and ghosting is better controlled, too. To go beyond life-size, adding the 6T close-up lens is the preferred choice. As with all AF Micro-Nikkors, the close-up lens should probably be mounted in a reversed position to ensure optimal corner-to-corner sharpness. When the 200 ED is applied to landscape photography, f/11 is the optimum (and only) setting that renders corner-to-corner sharpness.</p> <p>Many AF 200 Micro Nikkors develop a problem with the A/M collar. It has a poor plastic construction, is too wide, and hairline cracks eventually develop around the mounting screws. On my sample, the collar broke apart after 6 years of not being used. Secure the collar with tape from the onset and forget about AF, which is useless for close-ups anyway.</p> <p>IR: The 200 AF is troubled by IR hotspots, so is not recommended for critical IR work.</p>
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