

Nikkor AF-S 70-200mm f/2.8G IF-ED VR (FX) - Review / Test Report

Lens Reviews - Nikon / Nikkor (full format)

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Review by Markus Stamm

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The AF-S 70-200mm f/2.8 VR was the first fast Nikon telezoom to combine a sonic wave driven autofocus with Nikon's optical stabilization system (VR). At the time of this review the successor of this lens is already available, which leads to a noticeably reduced price level for used copies of the 70-200VR lens. It is now in reach for many more enthusiast, who unlike professional photographers were scared off by the rather high retail price of the lens.

In addition to the usual black finish the 70-200VR was also available as a light grey lens. Light coloured lenses are said to withstand very high temperatures and direct sunlight better than black ones, however Nikon's motivation to optionally offer this lens in this colour probably has been influenced more by marketing reasons rather than physics. The close similarity to Canon's long L lenses might be the reason why the grey lens was not very popular among the Nikon community and is a rather rare sight.

Move the mouse cursor over the text marks below to see the differently coloured lenses

[Black lens](#)[Light grey lens](#)

The build quality of the lens is excellent, a truly professional-grade lens. Most parts are made of metal with a slight crinkle finish. The broad rubberized zoom and focus control rings feel very smooth. The overall length of the lens does not change during zooming or focusing. It is a G-type lens so unlike its predecessors it does not offer an aperture ring anymore.

A tripod collar is part of the lens. The collar itself is not removable, however the tripod foot is. It's an easy procedure to remove or replace the supplied foot. There are several third party options available that feature an Arca-Swiss profiled foot and thus remove the need to screw on a lens plate (for those who use tripod or monopod heads with Arca Swiss profile).



The AF-S 70-200mm VR was the first high-speed Nikkor tele-zoom with a VR (Vibration Reduction) mechanism with an efficiency equivalent to 3 f-stops. The lens offers two VR modes - a "normal" mode for most situations inc. static scenes, object tracking as well as monopod shots whereas the 2nd "active" mode to compensate more pronounced vibrations (e.g. when shooting from a moving vehicle).

In addition to the VR controls there's also a switch to reduce the AF range as well as AF stop buttons at the front of the lens.

Thanks to an IF (internal focusing) design the front element does not rotate so using a polarizer is no problem (unless you attach the lens hood). Like all modern Nikkors it features a silent-wave (ultrasonic) AF motor providing extremely fast and near-silent AF operations as well as manual focus override at any time.

The lens is compatible to and retains AF with all three current Nikon tele converters.

Specifications

Optical construction	21 elements in 15 groups inc. 5 ED elements
Number of aperture blades	9 (rounded)
min. focus distance	1.5m (max. magnification ratio 1:6.1)
Dimensions	87x215mm
Weight	1470g
Filter size	77mm (non-rotating)
Hood	Nikon HB-29 (bayonet mount with lock, supplied), petal-shaped
Other features	Lens provides distance (D) information. Tripod collar with removable foot. Vibration reduction. Dust and waterproof rubber sealing.

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