

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

Lens Reviews - Nikon / Nikkor (full format)
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Sample Shots

The following sample shots were taken with a D3x and RAW-converted via CaptureOne 4.8.

Click on a thumbnail to view the original file (opens in a separate window).

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<p>Make NIKON CORPORATION Model NIKON D3X ISO Speed 200 Focal Length 200.0mm Aperture: f/5.6 Exposure 1/640s</p> 	<p>Make NIKON CORPORATION Model NIKON D3X ISO Speed 100 Focal Length 200.0mm Aperture: f/2.8 Exposure 1/1600s</p> 
<p>Make NIKON CORPORATION Model NIKON D3X ISO Speed 200 Focal Length 200.0mm Aperture: f/5.6 Exposure 1/160s</p> 	<p>Make NIKON CORPORATION Model NIKON D3X ISO Speed 100 Focal Length 200.0mm Aperture: f/4.0 Exposure 1/640s</p> 
<p>Make NIKON CORPORATION Model NIKON D3X ISO Speed 100 Focal Length 140.0mm Aperture: f/2.8 Exposure 1/2000s</p> 	<p>Make NIKON CORPORATION Model NIKON D3X ISO Speed 100 Focal Length 150.0mm Aperture: f/5.6 Exposure 1/320s</p> 
<p>Make NIKON CORPORATION Model NIKON D3X ISO Speed 100 Focal Length 200.0mm Aperture: f/4.0 Exposure 1/400s</p> 	<p>Make NIKON CORPORATION Model NIKON D3X ISO Speed 100 Focal Length 200.0mm Aperture: f/2.8 Exposure 1/2000s</p> 
<p>Make NIKON CORPORATION Model NIKON D3X ISO Speed 200 Focal Length 102.0mm Aperture: f/3.5 Exposure 1/2500s</p> 	<p>Make NIKON CORPORATION Model NIKON D3X ISO Speed 200 Focal Length 200.0mm Aperture: f/5.6 Exposure 1/1600s</p> 
<p>Make NIKON CORPORATION Model NIKON D3X ISO Speed 200 Focal Length 170.0mm Aperture: f/5.6 Exposure 1/320s</p> 	<p>Make NIKON CORPORATION Model NIKON D3X ISO Speed 200 Focal Length 95.0mm Aperture: f/9.0 Exposure 1/500s</p> 
<p>Make NIKON CORPORATION Model NIKON D3X ISO Speed 200 Focal Length 200.0mm Aperture: f/5.6 Exposure 1/400s</p> 	<p>Make NIKON CORPORATION Model NIKON D3X ISO Speed 100 Focal Length 175.0mm Aperture: f/8.0 Exposure 1/250s</p> 
<p>Make NIKON CORPORATION Model NIKON D3X ISO Speed 100 Focal Length 70.0mm Aperture: f/8.0 Exposure 1/160s</p> 	<p>Make NIKON CORPORATION Model NIKON D3X ISO Speed 100 Focal Length 98.0mm Aperture: f/3.5 Exposure 1/1600s</p> 

With tele converter:

<p>Make NIKON CORPORATION Model NIKON D3X ISO Speed 200 Focal Length 280.0mm Aperture: f/8.0 Exposure 1/640s</p> 	<p>Make NIKON CORPORATION Model NIKON D3X ISO Speed 200 Focal Length 280.0mm Aperture: f/8.0 Exposure 1/320s</p> 
<p>Make NIKON CORPORATION Model NIKON D3X ISO Speed 200 Focal Length 340.0mm Aperture: f/8.0 Exposure 1/800s</p> 	<p>Make NIKON CORPORATION Model NIKON D3X ISO Speed 200 Focal Length 340.0mm Aperture: f/8.0 Exposure 1/800s</p> 

Make NIKON CORPORATION
Model NIKON D3X
ISO Speed 200
Focal Length 400.0mm
Aperture: f/8.0
Exposure 1/1000s



Make NIKON CORPORATION
Model NIKON D3X
ISO Speed 200
Focal Length 400.0mm
Aperture: f/8.0
Exposure 1/500s



Verdict

There have been horror stories floating around the web suggesting the amount of vignetting and lack of sharpness of this lens at its long end is so terrible that it is barely usable on FX.

Well, to put things into perspective, there is some vignetting of course and it's a little higher than it should be, in addition the extreme corners show visibly less resolution at 200 mm. However apart from these two issues the lens performs on a very high level and produces very sharp images with very smooth bokeh.

The build quality is excellent, AF is very fast and silent, VR works as promised, allowing for 2 to 3 stops longer shutter times (with a suitable, i.e. non-moving subject). Obviously some thought and user feedback has been put into the design of the lens leading to useful features like the AF stop buttons, the removable tripod foot or the lock on the hood.

The performance with tele converters is not too impressive, though. The TC14 is certainly an option to extend reach and still get excellent sharpness, at least in the center when stopped down. The TC17 might be suitable for some needs, however combined with the TC20 the results no longer convince and it's questionable if a simple photoshop crop and resize would lead to worse results.

However, in summary the Nikkor 70-200 VR still is an impressive lens, which for many becomes even more attractive now that the prices for used lenses come down after the introduction of the version II model. Given the amount of sample variation we saw, though, it might be a good idea to carefully check for softness wide open if you plan to purchase used.

Optical Quality: ★★☆☆
Mechanical Quality: ★★★★★
Price/Performance: ★★☆☆