

Nikon AF-S Nikkor 70-200mm 1:2.8G ED VR II review

Andy Westlake, February 2010



The Nikon AF-S Nikkor 70-200mm 1:2.8G ED VR II was **announced in July 2009**, as the second iteration of the company's professional stabilized fast telezoom. It's the successor to the **AF-S Nikkor 70-200mm 1:2.8G ED VR** which first appeared in 2003, and brings to the table an entirely remastered optical system designed to match the demands of the latest high resolution FX format cameras such as the D3X, accompanied by an improved vibration reduction system which Nikon claims offers up to four stops stabilization.

The optics, as we'd expect for this kind of lens, are pretty exotic, with 21 elements in 16 groups. No fewer than 7 of these are fashioned from Extraordinary Dispersion (ED) glass to minimize aberrations, and Nikon's latest Nano Crystal Coating is employed to combat flare. One handling improvement is the addition of a new A/M focus mode, which prevents accidental movements of the focus ring from overriding the autofocus while it's operating. The build quality is appropriate for a professional workhorse lens, with a barrel that's made from magnesium alloy like the bodies of Nikon's pro-level DSLRs, and extensive sealing against dust and moisture.

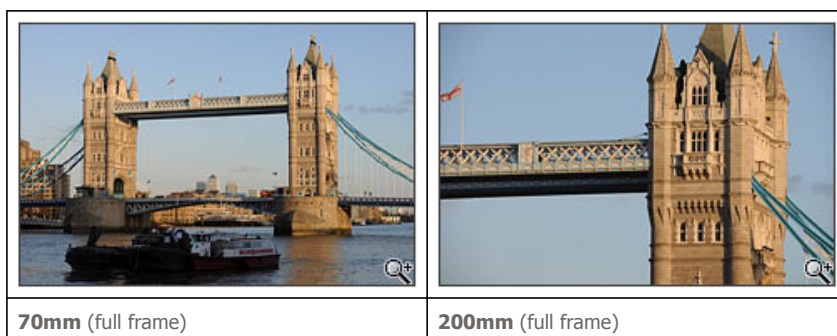
The 'VR II' has a high expectations to live up to, as its predecessor was considered pretty well best-in-class on DX format bodies. But with the shift to full-frame 'FX' sensors, its shortcomings towards the edge of the image field at longer focal lengths became somewhat exposed, with unusually soft corners even at small apertures, and heavy vignetting wide open. So the Nikon faithful (and more importantly its professional user base) will be hoping that the new model can address these issues on full frame, without significantly compromising performance on the smaller sensor format. So let's see if Nikon has achieved this goal.

Headline features

- 70-200mm focal length range; fast f/2.8 constant maximum aperture
- Optical image stabilization – 4 stops with automatic panning detection and 'active' mode
- Ring-type ultrasonic focusing with full-time manual override
- F mount for Nikon and Fuji DX and FX format DSLRS

Angle of view

The pictures below illustrate the focal length range from wide to telephoto, on FX (35mm full-frame) and DX (APS-C) camera bodies:





Nikon AF-S Nikkor 70-200mm 1:2.8G ED VR II specifications

Street price	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • US: \$2330 • UK: £1700
Date introduced	July 2009
Maximum format size	35mm full frame
Focal length	70-200mm
35mm equivalent focal length (APS-C)	105-300mm
Diagonal Angle of view (FF)	34° - 12°
Diagonal Angle of view (APS-C)	23° - 8°
Maximum aperture	F2.8
Minimum aperture	F22
Lens Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21 elements/16 groups • 7 ED elements
Number of diaphragm blades	9, rounded
Minimum focus	1.4m
Maximum magnification	0.12x at 200mm
AF motor type	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ring-type ultrasonic • Full-time manual focus - A/M and M/A modes
Focus method	Internal
Zoom method	Internal
Image stabilization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 stops claimed • Auto panning detection • Active mode
Filter thread	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 77mm • Does not rotate on focus
Supplied accessories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Front and rear caps • HB-48 Hood • CL-M4 Lens Pouch
Optional accessories	
Weight	1540g (3.4 lb)
Dimensions	87mm diameter x 209mm length (3.4 x 8.2 in)
Lens Mount	Nikon F only
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dust and moisture sealing • Reports focus distance information to camera body

* Supplied accessories may differ in each country or area

Foreword / notes

If you're new to digital photography you may wish to read some of our [Digital Photography Glossary](#) before diving into this article (it may help you understand some of the terms used).

Conclusion / recommendation / ratings are based on the opinion of the author, we recommend that you read the entire review before making any decision. Images which can be viewed at a larger size have a small magnifying glass icon in the bottom right corner of them, click to display a larger image in a new window.

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Dpreview use calibrated monitors at the PC normal gamma 2.2, this means that on our monitors we can make out the difference between all of the grayscale blocks below. We recommend to make the most of this review you should be able to see the difference (at least) between X,Y and Z and ideally also A, B and C.

