



Christian Rollinger's  
**Canon**  
 Photo Page



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## *How to determine the age of your Canon FD or EOS gear*

Note: This text is adapted from [W.J.Markerink's page](#).

### 1. Canon bodies

Because they are chronological, serial numbers usually do tell the approximate age of a Canon body or lens, but Canon Inc. has never put out any sort of public info about it. However, there's another way to get the information : look inside the body's film chamber for an alphanumeric code printed in black ink on the black surface of the film chamber. You may have to hold the camera under a strong light to see it. What you will see is a date code, possibly something like "U1140F".

**The first letter** tells the year the camera was manufactured: in this case, 1980. It is an alphanumeric code, i.e.

<b>A</b> =1960 or 1986	<b>K</b> =1970 or 1996	<b>U</b> =1980
<b>B</b> =1961 or 1987	<b>L</b> =1971 or 1997	<b>V</b> =1981
<b>C</b> =1962 or 1988	<b>M</b> =1972 or 1998	<b>W</b> =1982
<b>D</b> =1963 or 1989	<b>N</b> =1973 or 1999	<b>X</b> =1983
<b>E</b> =1964 or 1990	<b>O</b> =1974 or 2000	<b>Y</b> =1984
<b>F</b> =1965 or 1991	<b>P</b> =1975	<b>Z</b> =1985
<b>G</b> =1966 or 1992	<b>Q</b> =1976	
<b>H</b> =1967 or 1993	<b>R</b> =1977	
<b>I</b> =1968 or 1994	<b>S</b> =1978	
<b>J</b> =1969 or 1995	<b>T</b> =1979	

**The next two numbers** tell you what month the camera was made : (0)1= January till 12=December. In our example ("U1140F"), the camera was made in november. Sometimes, the leading zero for the month code is omitted, so an A-1 with a code of "Y362" would have been manufactured in March 1984 for instance.

**The following code** are an internal code that is irrelevant for determining age. On reports from Canon owners this internal code is occasionally omitted.

**The last letter** stands for the name of the factory. In this case "F" stands for Fukushima which was the main Canon SLR factory for about 20 years from the early 1970s until 1991. Note that the factory code is rarely omitted, if ever.

In 1986, the year code was restarted with "A" again, but the factory code was placed before it. Now that Canon SLRs are no longer manufactured at Fukushima, you're more likely to see a code starting with "O" for Oita. So, for SLRs, manufactured in 1994, you might see a code starting with "OI" followed by the month code.



## 2. Canon lenses

Incidentally, the same type of code is printed on the back of most FD and EF lenses as well, typically in small white characters on a black baffle in the rear lens mount. Since Canon's SLR lens factory is in Utsonomiya, you might see a date code starting with "UG" for a lens manufactured in 1992 for example. Previous to 1986, though, the lens date codes did not include the factory letter.

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