

Sticky Pod Car Cameras

We here at Sticky Pod want to convey our knowledge and experience of which camera makes and models work best with the Sticky Pod when attached to any car, truck, van, boat, motorcycle, airplane, RV, motorhome, trailer or any other vehicle. Some cameras work great and others, by design, will just not work very well. First let's look at cameras mounted to a vehicle. Cameras Mounted To A Vehicle Sticky Pod car cameras can be the smallest bullet (lipstick) cameras up to the largest Hollywood film cameras mounted to any vehicle on the planet. However, some cameras clearly perform much better than others. The first thing we want you to realize is the materials that the camera itself is made of. All cameras are made out of plastic with a metal subframe under the plastic to hold everything together. These metal subframes are the key to making a camera work well with a Sticky Pod. The first thing you should look for in any camera, is one that has a metal mounting socket. That's the screw hole that you use to attach the Sticky Pod to your camera. Almost all cameras use them, but some very small cameras do not have room for them, so please be careful what you buy. As you will see when you go out to buy a camera (or in your existing camera), many of them have a plastic mounting socket. These cameras still have a metal subframe, but the manufacturer chose to use the plastic housing to support your camera on a mount. This is the worst type of mount for use with a Sticky Pod. The plastic flexes and you cannot tighten the camera to the Sticky Pod as it will strip the threads inside the camera. Since the plastic on the camera will flex, this produces shaky, unstable video while driving, and is not the fault of the Sticky Pod, but of the camera itself. We do provide you with video instructions on how to use your Sticky Pod and we do provide some examples of what you can do to minimize the shake of a camera with a plastic mounting socket. On the other hand, there are many makes and models of cameras that use metal mounting sockets. These cameras have a mounting socket that is connected directly to the metal subframe of the camera itself. This is an excellent camera to choose for its strength and stability when mounted to a Sticky Pod. Not only can you get a good tight fit to your Sticky Pod, but these cameras produce far more stable and usable video, photographs or film. So before you buy, be sure to compare cameras and their physical features. What To Do Next? If you already have a camera with a plastic mounting socket, you can still use it with a Sticky Pod, but you may find the videos or photographs to be undesirable when using your camera at high speeds on the inside or outside of any vehicle. That's not to say that you should not try or that you cannot use the camera somewhere else. Sometimes the road you're driving on is very smooth and the camera will not bounce or vibrate. Other times, you will use your Sticky Pod in a stationary environment, such as surveillance from a window in your home or office. Remember, the Sticky Pod can stay in place for several days on a window or any other smooth non-porous surface. We also provide a tether for added safety in the event something happens when you're not around, something our competitors don't even offer and they never have. That should tell you something about us. Any way you look at it, the Sticky Pod will hold your camera in more places, for a longer time, than any other camera mount on the market today. The secrets in the suction cups. If you already have a camera with a metal mounting socket, congratulations, you have a perfect fit for any environment. This type of camera has the strength and durability for many years of use and it works great with any Sticky Pod model. Selecting Your Car Camera As you can see from above, the best choice is the one that meets your physical requirements. If you're never going to use a Sticky Pod in or on a car while driving, then any camera with any style of mounting socket will work. However, it's not always easy to predict the future, so we highly recommend you select a camera with a metal mounting socket. Other factors to consider relate to the environment you will be placing your camera into. For example, if you plan on capturing videos or pictures from the outside of your vehicle while racing, a very good idea, then we recommend a camera that has the following physical features: Metal mounting socket Small and lightweight (many cameras today can weigh less than 1 pound) Small battery (not the extended run batteries) Lens filter (ability to attach a lens filter to help protect the camera lens) You should then look for the following electronic features: Digital or electronic image stabilization (more on this below) MiniDV video tape format (all MiniDV produce DVD quality video) i.Link or IEEE 1394 Firewire Port (to transfer the videos or pictures to your computer) You should avoid buying digital video cameras with hard drives or DVD recording because of their inability to record in such a hostile environment. Every time you hit a bump, the camera will likely stop recording because of the jarring motion. It's a feature that's built into the camera to protect the hard drive or DVD write head. The short list above encompasses a vast majority of cameras on the market today. Any local store will have several choices for you to choose from. Just be sure to get a look at the bottom of the camera before you buy. Do NOT trust what the store associate tells you about your new camera. You should verify its physical and electronic features for yourself by taking a new one out of the box and review it right there in the store. If racing is not your style, but catching your neighbor, dead beat ex-husband (wife) or stupid criminals red handed, then the Sticky Pod is the best choice for your surveillance cameras. Let's face it, the Sticky Pod doesn't just give you a place to mount your camera, it holds your camera rock steady for crystal clear digital videos and photographs from any distance and in any lighting condition. If you happen to get caught in the act during a stake out in your car, you can take off with tires burning and never worry about your camera for even a moment. Now when it comes to surveillance, there are some great camera choices on the market today. Unlike the racing conditions above, you can use the hard drive and DVD recording cameras with excellent results. Some of these cameras can record DVD quality videos for up to 37 hours! We want you to recognize that this is a huge amount of power in your hands. The best part is, the Sticky Pod can endure for much longer than 37 hours. We have had Sticky Pods mounted to flat or curved glass for more than a week at a time. They are that good! Here are the physical features we recommend for surveillance: Metal mounting socket (you never know when you might have to speed off, but it's not necessary) Large camera with a high optical zoom (be sure it's an optical zoom and not a digital zoom) Large battery or AC/DC adapter (so you can plug it in for extended record times) You should then look for the following electronic features: Optical, digital or electronic image stabilization (many times this is not needed, but it's nice to have) Hard drive or DVD recording format (hard drives can record up to 37 hours!) i.Link or IEEE 1394 Firewire Port (to transfer the videos or pictures to your computer) Low light digital video recording (consider night vision since most crimes happen at night) Interval recording (creates time lapse video over many hours) In this case, you want to buy cameras with a hard drive or DVD for recording. That

doesn't mean that a video tape is bad, you just want to be sure the surveillance camera fits into the scenario you're recording. For example, if you want to record your car overnight from a window in your home, then a video tape that only lasts an hour will not do you any good. However, a camera that uses video tape and has interval recording capabilities will work very well for just such a scenario. The best solution for your surveillance needs always includes a good high resolution result. After all, if the police or judge cannot see the perps face, then the video is worthless. That's why it's important to have a good optical zoom on the camera you buy. Try to zoom in on the area or person you want to catch so you can clearly make out their face in the video or pictures. This also makes for a good reason to buy a camera with night vision capabilities. Once you have the criminal on video, then you can take action by contacting the police or local law enforcement and they will have all the proof they need to bring charges. If the person committed a crime, such as urinating in public, you will not have to press any charges. Just give the police the tape and they will take it from there. Since it's a crime against the community, your job is all done after you tell them who it is and turn over the tape.

Distinguishing Camera Features

What's the difference between optical zoom and digital zoom? Optical zoom allows the camera to capture zoom images without a loss of picture quality. Digital zoom degrades the quality of the picture the more you zoom in on the subject. It will get to the point where you cannot even see the subject. That's why digital zoom is a worthless feature on all cameras and optical zoom is what you want to focus on (excuse the pun). In night time situations, the optical zoom is the only way to capture crystal clear images from a distance. The optical zoom also works very well with the night vision.

Why is digital or electronic image stabilization better than optical for racing? Optical image stabilization uses two lenses to stabilize a given scene you have in your viewfinder. There's a second lens behind the one you can see on the outside of the camera that moves in the opposite direction of the camera's movement. This helps maintain a clear image of the scene in your viewfinder. The problem is, the stabilizing lens floats inside the camera and cannot handle the bumps and jarring from racing or just normal driving. The digital or electronic image stabilization does degrade the picture quality, but it's so slight that it's impossible for the naked eye to see.

Why do I need an i.Link or IEEE 1394 Firewire Port (always referred to as a firewire port)? These are all one in the same, they are just referred to by either term. Just look for either one on the camera's features. The reason you want a firewire port is because of its ability to transfer large amounts of video in a short amount of time. Just a few minutes of video tape will take up many gigabytes of hard drive space and transferring all that video to your computer can take a long time. The firewire port can transfer up to 400 megabytes of video per second. That's faster than the tape itself can run. That's a good thing. Also be sure your computer has a firewire port to accept the video from your camera.

Which Camera Brands Make Good Sticky Pod Car Cameras?

When you're ready to buy a camera, remember your operating environment. Ask yourself a handful of questions such as; Will I be using my Sticky Pod camera for surveillance? Will I be racing my Sticky Pod car camera? Will I be driving around town stopping road rage or making an independent film? Here are some camera brands we have worked with during our video productions: Sony PD-150 and PD-170, Sony F900, Sony HVR-Z1U, Canon XL-2, Canon Optura 50, Panasonic DVX-100B, Panasonic HVX-200, Panasonic PV-DV401, Panasonic PD-DV203. So which ones worked well and which ones failed. A failure in this case is unusable video. Our operating environment is that of mounting the camera to the outside of a vehicle and driving up to highway speeds. The optical image stabilized cameras by Canon did not perform well. If we had to give a rating, 10 being the best, we would give the Canon Optura 50 a rating of 3, and the Canon XL-2 would rate a 6. The Sony cameras listed above are also optical image stabilized and performed the best of all the cameras listed. We would rate the Sony HVR-Z1U a 7, the PD-150 and PD-170 an 8, with the Sony F900 getting a 9 out of 10! The Panasonic HVX-200 is also an OIS (Optical Image Stabilized), however we would rate it a 7 out of 10. Sony appears to have a better grip on optical image stabilization (OIS), but all the camera manufacturers are getting better at producing cameras that handle tough environments. Don't shy away from any of them, just use them in a manner that will produce stable usable video for your video productions. All cameras have their limitations, with a minimal amount of practice, you'll be a pro in no time.

The remaining cameras in the list above all have Electronic Image Stabilization (EIS), and provide a great picture under all operating environments. We would rate them an 8 out of 10 for the smaller cameras and a 9 out of 10 for the Panasonic DVX-100B.

Car Camera Summary

The first thing to consider when buying your car camera is what you want to do with it. Of course, we want you to buy a Sticky Pod with it and we hope this page helps you discover what works best for you. We're asking you to buy the Sticky Pod model that fits your scenario. So who buys Sticky Pods anyway? To see the customers and testimonials, be sure to visit our customers page.

The following is a list of Sticky Pod owners: Independent Film Makers, Video Production Companies (mostly for the car, truck and corporate commercials you see on TV), Research Organizations, Corporate Video Trainers, SCCA Racers, Drifting Racers, Police Officers, Private Investigators, Insurance Fraud Investigators, Scorned Women, People tired of road rage (they stick it on their trunk and point backwards), Amateur Video Hobbyists, People taking vacations in their favorite car, truck, van, boat, RV, motorhome or trailer, Students taking video courses in school, Kids that make videos instead of playing video games, Bird watchers (nature watching), Helicopter pilots, Airplane pilots, Military combat photographers (let the Sticky Pod get the shot in a fire fight), Military battle commanders (Sticky Pod's are all metal and bullet proof, better they get shot than you), Law firms (recreate accident scenes and verify drive times on camera). The list goes on and on, and we find out more and more every day about our customers. We always encourage you to tell us about yourself and your adventures. Just send us some pictures of your Sticky Pod in the manner you use it and we will create a link back to your website and post your comments. Of course, Sticky Pod owners get to use our video gallery to upload videos and pictures. Many thanks for your time and we look forward to seeing you real soon.

About the Author

Learn how to select eyeglasses and contact lenses, including eyeglass frames and lenses, as well as laser eye surgery.