

Nikon FM2

Nikon FM2 SLR Film Camera User Manual

Model: FM2

[Introduction](#)[Setup](#)[Operating the Camera](#)[Maintenance](#)[Troubleshooting](#)[Specifications](#)

1. INTRODUCTION

The Nikon FM2 is a robust mechanical single-lens reflex (SLR) film camera, renowned for its durability and reliability. It operates primarily without the need for batteries, except for its built-in exposure meter. This manual provides comprehensive instructions for the proper setup, operation, and maintenance of your Nikon FM2 camera. The FM2, and its slightly modified successor the New FM2, are highly regarded as excellent tools for learning the fundamentals of photography due to their fully manual control over focus and aperture settings.

2. SETUP

2.1. Battery Installation (for Exposure Meter)

While the core mechanical functions of the Nikon FM2 do not require battery power, the built-in exposure meter does. The camera uses Silver Oxide or Alkaline battery cells. To install or replace batteries:

1. Locate the battery compartment cover on the bottom of the camera.
2. Use a coin to unscrew the cover counter-clockwise.
3. Insert the new batteries, ensuring correct polarity as indicated inside the compartment.
4. Replace the cover and screw it clockwise until secure.



Figure 1: Bottom view of the Nikon FM2 camera, highlighting the battery compartment and tripod mount.

2.2. Lens Mounting and Removal

The Nikon FM2 uses the Nikon F mount. It is compatible with AI and AI-S NIKKOR lenses. Pre-AI lenses can also be mounted, but require careful handling to avoid damage to the camera's metering coupling lever.

To Remove a Lens:

1. Hold the camera securely.
2. Locate the lens release button on the camera body, typically near the lens mount.
3. Press and hold the lens release button.
4. While holding the button, turn the lens clockwise until it detaches from the camera body.
5. Immediately attach a body cap to the camera and a rear cap to the lens to protect the internal components from dust and damage.



Figure 2: Front view of the Nikon FM2 camera with a lens attached and lens cap in place.



Figure 3: Front view of the Nikon FM2 camera, showing the lens without its cap.

To Mount a Lens:

1. Remove the body cap from the camera and the rear cap from the lens.

2. Align the mounting index (usually a white dot or line) on the lens with the corresponding index on the camera body's lens mount.
3. Insert the lens into the camera mount.
4. Turn the lens counter-clockwise until it clicks into place. This indicates it is securely locked.
5. For pre-AI lenses, ensure the metering coupling lever on the camera body is flipped up before mounting to prevent damage. AI and AI-S lenses have a notch that bypasses this lever.

3. OPERATING THE CAMERA

3.1. Film Loading

The Nikon FM2 uses 35mm film. To load film:

1. Open the camera back by pulling up the film rewind knob.
2. Place the film cartridge into the film chamber.
3. Pull the film leader across to the take-up spool and insert it into one of the slots.
4. Advance the film slightly using the film advance lever to ensure it catches on the sprocket teeth.
5. Close the camera back firmly.
6. Advance the film two frames, pressing the shutter release button after each advance, until the frame counter shows '1'. The film rewind knob should rotate as you advance the film, indicating proper loading.



Figure 4: Rear view of the Nikon FM2 camera, showing the film door and viewfinder.

3.2. Setting Exposure

The Nikon FM2 features a manual exposure system with a built-in Center Weighted metering system. You control both shutter speed and aperture.

- **ISO Setting:** Lift and rotate the outer ring of the shutter speed dial to set the film's ISO (ASA) sensitivity.
- **Shutter Speed:** Rotate the shutter speed dial to select your desired shutter speed, ranging from 1 second to 1/4000th of a second, plus 'B' (Bulb) for long exposures.
- **Aperture:** Adjust the aperture ring on your lens to control the lens opening (f-stop).
- **Metering:** Look through the viewfinder. The exposure meter will indicate if your chosen settings result in over, under, or correct exposure. Adjust either shutter speed or aperture until the meter indicates correct exposure.



Figure 5: Top-front view of the Nikon FM2 camera, showing the shutter speed dial and film advance lever.

3.3. Focusing

The Nikon FM2 is a manual focus camera. To achieve sharp focus:

1. Look through the viewfinder.
2. Rotate the focusing ring on your lens until the image in the split-image rangefinder or microprism collar appears sharp and aligned.

3.4. Taking a Picture

Once the film is loaded, exposure set, and focus achieved:

1. Advance the film using the film advance lever until it stops. This cocks the shutter.
2. Compose your shot through the viewfinder.
3. Gently press the shutter release button to take the picture.

3.5. Film Rewinding and Unloading

After exposing all frames on the film roll:

1. Press the film rewind release button on the bottom of the camera.
2. Unfold the film rewind crank on the film rewind knob.
3. Turn the film rewind crank clockwise until you feel a slight resistance release, indicating the film leader has detached from the take-up spool. Continue winding until all film is back in the cartridge.
4. Pull up the film rewind knob to open the camera back.
5. Remove the film cartridge.

4. MAINTENANCE

Proper care and maintenance will ensure the longevity and optimal performance of your Nikon FM2 camera.

- **Cleaning:** Use a soft, lint-free cloth to wipe the camera body. For lenses, use a lens brush or air blower to remove dust, followed by a specialized lens cleaning solution and cloth if necessary. Avoid touching lens elements directly.
- **Storage:** When not in use, store the camera in a cool, dry place, away from direct sunlight and extreme temperatures. It is advisable to remove batteries if storing for extended periods to prevent leakage. Keep the lens and body caps on to protect the camera's interior and lens elements.
- **Avoid Moisture:** The Nikon FM2 is not water-resistant. Protect it from rain, splashes, and high humidity.
- **Professional Servicing:** For internal cleaning or repairs, it is recommended to consult a qualified camera technician.



Figure 6: Side view of the Nikon FM2 camera, showing strap lug and body texture.



Figure 7: Another side view of the Nikon FM2 camera, highlighting its robust construction.

5. TROUBLESHOOTING

This section addresses common issues you might encounter with your Nikon FM2.

Problem	Possible Cause	Solution
Exposure meter not working	Dead or incorrectly installed batteries.	Check battery polarity or replace batteries.
Film advance lever jammed	Film not properly loaded or camera mechanism requires servicing.	Ensure film is correctly spooled. If issue persists, seek professional repair.
Shutter not firing	Film not advanced, shutter cocked, or self-timer engaged.	Advance film lever fully. Check if self-timer is active.
Lens difficult to mount/remove	Incorrect alignment or release button not fully pressed.	Ensure index marks are aligned. Press lens release button firmly. Do not force.

6. SPECIFICATIONS

Feature	Detail
Brand	Nikon
Model Name	Nikon FM2 SLR

Feature	Detail
Model Number	FM2
Form Factor	SLR
Compatible Mountings	Nikon F
Focus Type	Manual Focus
Metering Description	Center Weighted
Exposure Control	Manual
Maximum Shutter Speed	1/4000 seconds
Minimum Shutter Speed	1 second
Battery Type	Silver Oxide, Alkaline (for meter only)
Item Weight	907 Grams
Item Height	12 inches
Image Stabilization	No
Camera Flash	No built-in flash
Flash Sync Speed	1/200th of a second
Viewfinder	Optical
Self Timer	Yes (10 seconds)
Water Resistance Level	Not Water Resistant

© 2025 Nikon. All rights reserved.

ASK A QUESTION ABOUT THIS MANUAL

Ask about setup, troubleshooting, compatibility, parts, safety, or missing instructions. Manuals+ will review the question and use this page's manual context to help answer it.

Name

Anonymous

Email

you@example.com

After a successful submission, we securely hash the supplied account or form email before sending it to Microsoft Advertising for conversion attribution. [Privacy details](#).

Question

Example: How do I reset this device or fix this error?

Details

Model number, symptoms, what you tried, or the section of the manual you are using.

Submit question