

PETER'S NINJA 360 PICS

360 CAMERA OVERVIEW

NOTES: This course is designed around the **Ricoh Theta** camera - when I first started to become interested in pursuing 360 / panorama picture taking, I was looking for what to buy.

I noted that the man in the video on Google's Trusted Photographer page was using a Theta, I decided I was going to use that, for obvious reasons.

I had bought a Samsung Gear camera two months before and I found that it did not work on an iPhone, and I found the manual to very unclear. I believe that there is now an Apple App for the Samsung Gear, and we intend to buy one and test it out in the coming months. However, the Theta has always had both an Android app and an iOS app, so this is my recommendation for everyone.

Clearly, I also designed the course around the Theta APP, as well. If you have another camera, you will have to use that software, but the general concept will be the same.

The app will control the camera, it will connect via Wifi, and you will have to transfer the pictures from the camera's memory (card or internal) to your phone in order to work with them. There will also usually be a way to send the pictures from the camera directly up to Google through your phone, without stopping at your phone, too but I don't necessarily recommend that unless you have a specific reason for doing so.

I like to transfer them to my phone, and then decide which from the group I want to transfer from the Streetview app to Google.

With all cameras, your pictures will only get geo-tagged if you shoot using your phone's remote. None of them have built-in GPS.

PLEASE NOTE: Keep your lens protector sleeve on your camera at all times, except you must take it off. - Further, watch that the wind (or bad positioning) does not blow over your camera as you step away to take the picture (this has happened to me).

The lens protrudes, and there is no way to protect it while you are taking pictures (like a lens hood on a regular camera for example).

If your lens gets scratched or shatters it CANNOT be fixed. In many cases a scratch may not be bad enough to show up in pictures to the extent that the pictures cannot be used, but nevertheless - this is an expensive piece of equipment so please take care.

The tripod I have recommended here has smaller legs that almost disappear in the 360 pictures, and that is great thing, however, the price you pay for this is that the tripod is not nearly as stable as a traditional tripod.

I have never had a problem except once when I was shooting in high wind, and I took an unnecessary chance. Be careful.

Currently, in the APP store there are three Theta APPs.

- 1.) Ricoh Theta APP - the basic app that I use in the course. Remote control, transfer, etc.
- 2.) Ricoh Theta + - this gives you editing features that the basic program does not. I will be adding a video on this program soon. It does not offer iPad support, which I think is a shame. Hopefully that will change soon, as editing on an iPad is much easier.
- 3.) Theta S remote - this is NOT a Ricoh-made program. It is a third party app that is just a standalone remote control. I have not tested it or used it yet, as such I cannot recommend it.

THE TRIPOD that I use and recommend is the Smatree Q3.

Link to product: <https://amzn.to/2FfyPMa>

They have a new one with carbon fiber legs that its a few bucks more here:

Link to product: <https://amzn.to/2FiKzyO>

Tripod notes: We have not tested the newer one which looks to be better, but the Q3 is a great little device, and until the newer one came out a couple of months ago, it was the only device of its kind of the market - it is essentially a selfie stick with a little leg module that you can screw on to make it a free standing monopod; perfect for 360 pictures. They are not enormously sturdy, but at \$20 it should be no problem to buy a new one every several months if you need to. In addition as an added bonus both tripods come with an iPhone holder, so they can double as true selfie sticks if you use the self timer on your phone's camera.

CAMERAS:

I recommend the Ricoh Theta Cameras. We use a Theta S and a Theta V. They are very similar, except that the Theta V is the newer one, as of this writing, and is supposed to be superior in every way. We have found them to be quite similar, except we have had better luck with the Wifi connection on the older model. We have not tested the SC.

We strongly recommend that you buy these products through Amazon since their return policy makes returning things extremely easy, I you decide you want a

different model. We never buy any of these specialty products at a big box store (such as Best Buy) whose return policies (and lines) are, in our opinion, extremely difficult and restrictive.

Ricoh Theta S

12 MP still photos, 1080P video shooting, stereo audio, 8GB internal memory,, standard micro USB charger, 12MP photos, HDMI out, standard micro USB charger, wifi control

Link to product: <https://amzn.to/2Clmupa>

Ricoh Theta V

12 MP still photos, 4K video shooting, omnidirectional 4 channel audio, 19GB internal memory, image stabilization for video, standard micro USB charger, 12MP photos, 360 live streaming in 4K, wifi control

Link to product: <https://amzn.to/2udPrPv>

Ricoh Theta SC

12MP still photos, 1080P video, 8GB internal memory, wifi control, single channel audio

Link to product: <https://amzn.to/2CjrsCX>

Samsung Gear 360 4K

4K video, 8.4MP still pictures, stereo microphones, dust and splash proof, wifi control, no internal memory (SD micro cards). Works with Android and iOS but Samsung cryptically states: "there are functional limitations when using the Gear 360 with iOS devices"

We will test this camera soon. But cannot recommend it until we do.

Link to product: <https://amzn.to/2TGT4N9>

LG R105

13MP still pics, 2K video, 5.1 surround sound, will not work without external memory card. Supposedly works now with iOS and Android, but six months ago, it only worked with Android.

We have not tested this camera and cannot recommend it.

Link to product: <https://amzn.to/2TGT4N9>