

# KODAK CREATE-A-PRINT SYSTEM

by Jack and Sue Drafa

## PHOTOGRAPHIC'S USER REPORT

We live in a fast-paced world where patience is a rare virtue. We thrive on fast food, 20-minute tune-ups, while-you-wait service, even one-hour film processing. But, when it comes to making enlargements from our color negatives, we generally have to pay custom prices and wait several days, or take whatever the one-hour machines decide to provide as the final print. Of course, we could take the time and expense to set up our own color darkrooms in order to achieve the final print of our dreams, but who needs all the hassle?

Fortunately, Kodak has come out with a machine that gives us custom prints, just the way we want them, when we need them, and best of all, we get the thrill of doing the printing ourselves! Kodak's Create-a-Print allows photographers, pro and amateur alike, to have creative freedom—while you wait!

### SYSTEM OVERVIEW

The Kodak Create-a-Print system can be found in many camera stores, supermarkets, and shopping malls in your neighborhood. It is simple to operate and takes less than five minutes to become an expert. The basic concept of the Create-a-Print system is that you can load a negative, select the desired print size, select your cropping, color balance, and exposure, and have a final print in less than ten minutes.

At present, you will find two slightly different models, depending on the age of the unit. The first model is called Create-a-Print and the second is called Create-a-Print II (just like the movies). Both operate in much the same way, so we will review the first of the two models and then describe the differences between them.

You Stop,  
You Crop,  
It Prints!

### INSIDE THE CREATE-A-PRINT SYSTEM

To understand how all this works, we will take you on a quick tour inside the Create-a-Print system.

The top of the unit consists of a computerized machine enlarger that can print a variety of print sizes on 11-inch roll paper. A visual representation of the photo is displayed on the monitor. You have access to this enlarger via controls on the front of the unit, which allow you to compose your final photo. As soon as the image is exposed, it is sent to a special RA-4 color-print processor located in the bottom of the machine, where it is processed and dried. This process can be repeated in as little as 40-second intervals.

### MAKING YOUR FIRST PRINT

We found that it is best to select the desired negatives before entering the camera store, so that you don't need to spend a lot of time using the Create-a-Print system as a fancy light box. Once you have selected the negative you want to print, remove any dust from the negative with a camel's-hair brush, or the can of compressed air that is usually supplied by the camera store.

Insert your negative, emulsion side

down, into the machine. The Create-a-Print will pull the negative into its enlarging stage, and display the first image on the screen. A bar-code reader inside the machine will read the film edge, and set the machine up for that particular film. If you have an emulsion that the machine can't read, you can manually set the film type using the remote-function box, which is part of the Create-a-Print system.

Four controls are located on the front of the Create-a-Print system. Using the roller-ball control in the middle, and the control just above it, first select your print size: 5X7-, 8X10-, 11X14-, or 4X11-inches. For instance, you may select a horizontal 5X7-inch print for your first enlargement. If you had picked a vertical 5X7-inch print, you would then use the control to the left of the roller-ball to turn the image 90° for proper viewing.

You can then use the roller-ball to move from one negative to the next. If you require any special cropping, you would use the control to the right of the roller-ball to enlarge or reduce the image. If you need additional corrections for color balance and/or exposure, you would make those corrections on the remote keypad next to the Create-a-Print machine.

Once you've made all your selections, press the square button above the roller-ball, and the machine will do the rest. In about 40 seconds, you can begin working on the next picture. Your first print should come out of the bottom of the machine in about 4 minutes. Retail personnel in the store will trim the prints down to the final print size for you.

### CREATE-A-PRINT II

The Create-a-Print II system is very similar to the original system, except

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1. A Kodak Create-a-Print machine being operated at Suburban Photo in Beaverton, Oregon.

2. Note the four basic controls on the main panel, and the extension controls in the box at the left. The roller-ball moves you around the screen's edit menu, and moves the negative's position once an item has been selected. The control to the left of the roller-ball rotates the image 90°, to switch from a horizontal to a vertical format; the control to the right enlarges the image for special cropping; and the control at the top makes a selection once you have set the control properly. The negative is fed into the slot at the upper right.

3. In this image of the screen, notice the control menu on the left and the 5X7-inch full-frame image on the right.

4. Here's the same screen image, only now it's vertical and cropped slightly.

5.& 6. The corresponding prints generated by Kodak's Create-a-Print system.



ALL PHOTOS BY AUTHOR



## HELPFUL HINTS

**AIRPORT REGULATIONS:** In Britain, they are stringent. Don't bother to ask for a hand inspection of film, you won't get it. The rule is: if it doesn't go through the machine, it doesn't fly. Film of ISO 400 or less will probably be okay. However, the effects of the x-ray machines are cumulative, so request hand inspection while still in the U.S. and take a deep breath and suffer in silence while in Britain. Don't, under any circumstances, pack film in checked luggage; they do X-ray it, usually at full power.

**EQUIPMENT:** Travel light, but remember how far away from home you are. You might have only one chance at these wonderful images. Mistakes will be costly, and cannot be put right later. A tripod is essential. It's bulky, but can be packed away with your clothes in a large suitcase. Carry at least two camera bodies, one extreme wide-angle lens, either 24mm or 20mm—a must for those magnificent buildings and ruins—and a couple of zoom lenses in the range of 35mm to 200mm. Your camera's built-in meter will work fine for most of your photographs, but it might be a good idea to take along a handheld meter, just in case.

**FILM:** Choice of film depends on what you're after, and it's expensive in England. Generally, the slower the film the better. Kodak Ektar 25 seems best for print work, and you can't beat either Kodachrome or Fujichrome for your transparencies.

gle day, and can be begun from either end of the Cotswold chain. To start at Chipping Campden, take the M40 from London to Oxford, then the A34 toward Stratford-on-Avon. Go about 15 miles and turn right onto the A44 to Morton-in-Marsh, and follow the signs to Chipping Campden.

To start at Cirencester, take the M4 from London to Swindon, then take the A419 to Cirencester.

## CASTLE COUNTRY

The little town of Dunster lies on the edge of Exmoor and on the north coast of Devon. It is steeped in history, and the whole Exmoor area offers a wonderful experience; from the seaside resort of Minehead in the east, to Lynton, and Combe Martin in the west. Dunster's castle, located on a hill overlooking the town, is considered to be the area's main attraction.

To the south lies the city of Exeter, with its famous cathedral; and to the

west are the splendid ruins of Okehampton and Old Wardour Castles.

Though Ludlow, in Shropshire, is a little farther out, the two castles located there are well worth a visit. Stokesay, in particular, is considered unique, in that it hardly can be considered the typical English fortress; more a fortified manor.

The imposing ruins of Goodrich Castle are located on the southern border of Shropshire.

Easily reached from London, and only a two-hour drive along the A30, is the tiny, though now very popular, fishing village of Poole in Dorset. Poole, with its wharfs, seafood stalls, and fishing boats, offers hundreds of picturesque possibilities.

As far as the photographer is concerned, Dorset has it all. However, the small town of Corfe, and its ruined castle, is a treat not to be missed. The castle dominated the skyline for almost 1000 years. It was finally destroyed by Parliamentary engineers after the Royalist surrender in 1646.

What visit to England would be complete without a visit to Stonehenge? So much has been written about the famous megaliths I need only say they are a photographic must. Stonehenge is located less than two hours' drive from London, along the A30, and close to Salisbury, Old Sarum, and Avebury.

Only a little further westward is the ancient city of Bath, with its magnificent abbey, famous Victorian buildings, and Roman bathhouse. The city of Wells, famous for its cathedral, is located less than a dozen miles to the south, and the tiny but historic town of Glastonbury—the legendary site of Avalon—with its ruined abbey, and what is claimed to be the grave of King Arthur, is situated just a few miles southeast.

All these wonderful places can be visited in a single day. However, an overnight stay will ensure that you see as much of the area as possible.

By the end of the 12th century, it is estimated that there were more than 5000 castles and fortified houses scattered around the English countryside. Many of them are long gone, and most of the rest are now in ruins. However, one is likely to find something of interest at the end of almost every country lane. Keep an eye out for the little country churches. They are extremely photogenic, and one never knows what treasures are to be found inside.

For example, in the little church of St. John the Baptist at Wickhamford, just 80 miles north-west of London, is the tomb of Penelope Washington, cousin of our first president. On that tomb, you'll find the coat-of-arms of the Washington family, the prototype of the American flag. Happy motoring! ■

# KODAK

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that it has additional functions and controls. A fifth control has been added to the main panel, which allows you to cycle through the functions of the screen menu. The newer machine also reads 40 different film types, compared to the original machine's 32 types. In addition to the standard print sizes found on the original machine, the new model outputs 5X11- and 8X11-inch prints, as well.

Many of these new features found on the Create-a-Print II system can be upgraded in the original Create-a-Print system. The machine that we tested was an original Create-a-Print machine with most of the new Create-a-Print II labels on the machine. We would advise first-time users to ask the store what functions and print sizes are available for their specific machine.

## TESTING THE SYSTEM

Our first observation was how easy the machine was to use. We found all the controls very versatile, and in a matter of minutes we were making a variety of custom enlargements. We tried film emulsions that were not programmed into the machine, and discovered that they were easily set with the remote-control device. We found the color rendition of the image on the color monitor was very close to the final print, and color corrections on the screen were very accurately reflected in the prints the machine produced.

One problem we encountered was that the machine seemed to be very popular, and it was very difficult to get a turn with the machine to make our prints.

## CONCLUSION

Although the cost of enlargements varies from store to store, the prices we encountered at Suburban Photo in Beaverton, Oregon were \$2.95 for a 5X7-inch print, \$5.95 for an 8X10-inch print, and \$11.95 for an 11X14-inch print.

The Kodak Create-a-Print system is a photo experience that both amateur and professional photographers should try. We found the whole process educational and just plain fun to do. Keep the Create-a-Print in mind when you need that enlargement today—not tomorrow, or the day after that. Give Kodak's answer to the "I needed it yesterday" society a try.

In closing, we would like to convey our gratitude to the good folks at Suburban Photo for all their assistance and eagerness to help us. To find the Create-a-Print nearest you, contact Kodak at 1-800-242-2424. ■