front view (lens cover is open)
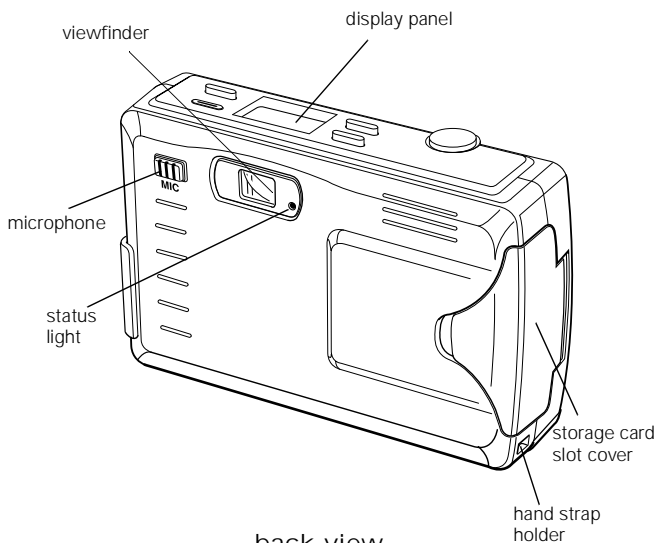
back view
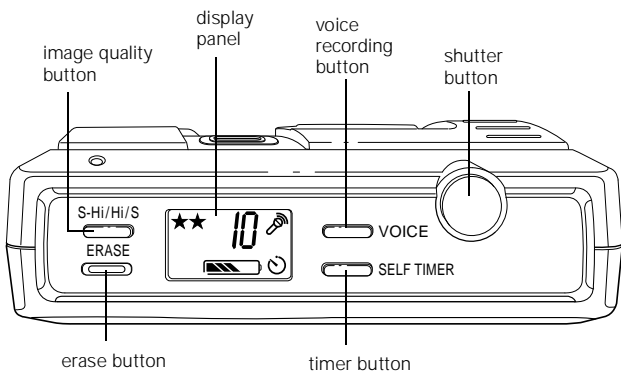
top view

Specifications

Camera

Physical Dimensions

Width	4.2 in (106.5 mm)
Height	2.6 in (66.8 mm)
Depth	1.5 in (37.2 mm)
Weight	5.4 oz (153 g), without batteries

Safety Specifications

Conforms to FCC specifications.
FCC Declaration of Conformity on file.

Power

Sources	3 AA batteries (single-use alkaline, lithium or rechargeable NiCd or NiMH)
	Optional AC adapter (B867038)
Battery Life	At least 300 pictures, including download time.

Technical

Product type	CCD (charged coupled device) still frame fixed focus camera
Image size	Super high, 640×480 pixels (low compression)
	High, 640×480 pixels (standard compression)
	Standard, 320×240 pixels
DPI	144 pixels per inch
Bit depth	16 million colors, 24-bit
CCD	1/3 inch progressive scan 640×480 pixels
Serial interface	2.5 mm mini terminal (to camera) RS-232C compatible (to computer)
Serial communication speed	Up to 115Kbps
Internal memory	1MB flash memory
Optional expansion memory	3.3V SSFDC (solid state floppy disk cards) or SmartMedia cards

Environmental

Temperature	Operating: 32 to 104°F (0 to 40°C)
	Non-operating: −4 to 140°F (−20 to 60°C)
Humidity	Operating: 30 to 90% (non-condensing)
	Non-operating: 10 to 90% (non-condensing)

Photographic

Lens	f = 6 mm F2.8/8 (equivalent to a 43 mm lens on a 35 mm camera)
Range	23.6 inches (60 cm) to infinity
	3.9 to 21.7 inches (10 to 55 cm, macro mode)
Sensitivity	Equivalent to ISO 100
Exposure control	Program auto exposure
White balance	TTL automatic white balance
Shutter	Automatic electric iris with mechanical shutter, 1/4 second to 1/1000 second
Viewfinder	Optical, with centering crosshairs and edge border
Focus	Fixed focus
Aperture	F2.8/8.0

Microphone

Frequency response	200Hz to 2.3Hz at −30DB
	400Hz to 1.3Hz at −20DB

Optional AC Adapter

Physical Dimensions

|	
Width	1.97 inches (50 mm)
Height	1.18 inches (30 mm)
	1.85 inches (47 mm) including pins
Depth	3.74 inches (95 mm)

Technical

|	
Output	DC 7V/2.0A
Input	110 to 120V AC, 50 to 60Hz

Using Batteries

Installing Batteries

Before you install the batteries, make sure the camera is turned off (the lens cover is closed). Then follow these steps:

1. Turn the camera upside down with the back facing you.

2. Open the battery cover by sliding it in the direction of the arrow, as shown below:
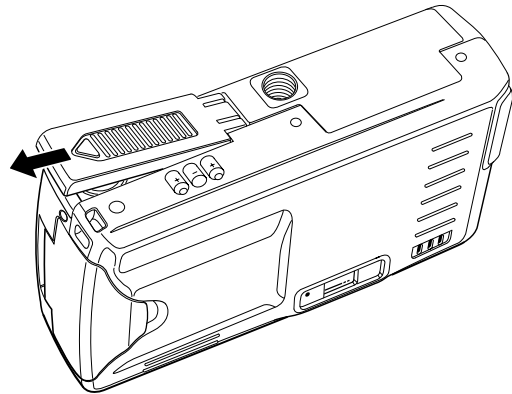
3. Insert all three batteries into the compartment, positioning the + and - ends as shown below:

battery positions
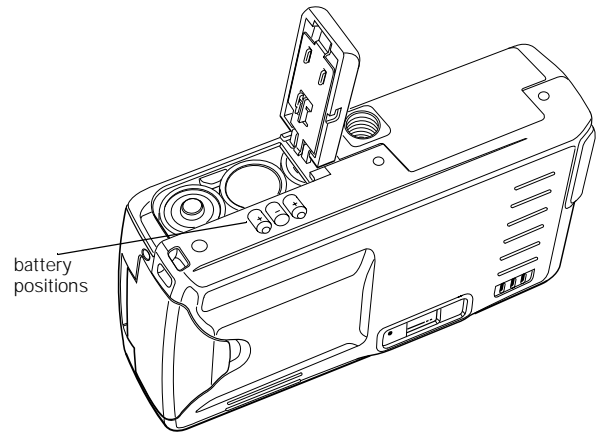
4. Close the battery cover and slide it to the right until it snaps into place.

Handling Batteries

When your PhotoPC 550 batteries wear out, you can replace them with any of the following:

❏ Single-use AA alkaline batteries (Energizer® brand recommended)

❏ Single-use AA lithium batteries (longer life)

❏ Rechargeable AA NiCd batteries

❏ Rechargeable AA NiMH batteries

WARNING
To avoid the danger of fire or explosion, do not mix different types of batteries. Do not allow the battery contacts to touch metal objects such as coins or keys, which could short out the battery's circuits. Read all safety and handling instructions before using batteries.

Note the following when handling batteries:

❏ Use the batteries that came with your camera only in EPSON digital cameras.

❏ Do not use manganese batteries.

❏ Battery life varies depending on the battery type and the manufacturer.

Checking the Display Panel

The display panel shows the camera's current settings, the number of pictures remaining, and status of your batteries.
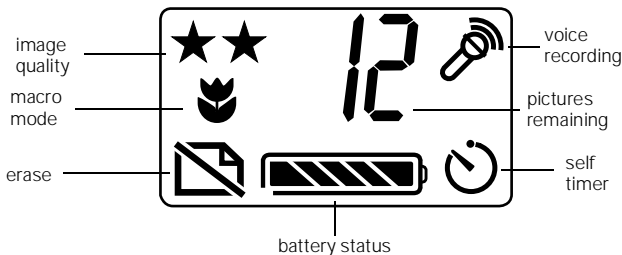
Checking the Battery

Before you take pictures, check the battery icon on the control panel. The icon shows how much battery power you have left, in the following stages.

Full battery power (or AC adapter in use)

to Battery power is decreasing

Battery power low (time to buy new batteries)

Battery power is almost out

Change batteries

NOTE
When the battery power is low, image processing is less reliable.

The battery icon flashes when your battery power is completely out. At this point, you can't take pictures until you replace the batteries or use the optional AC adapter.

You should use the battery icon only as a guide to estimate remaining power. Several factors can affect battery life, including the surrounding temperature and the type of batteries you use. Low temperatures—especially below 50 °F (10 °C)—drain your batteries faster.

Setting Image Quality

PhotoPC 550 has three image quality (resolution) settings: Standard, High, and Super High.

Press the image quality button on top of the camera to cycle from one setting to the other. The image quality icons (shown below) appear on the display panel.

Standard (S)

★   Produces color images at 320×240 pixels, with standard compression. The image size is smaller and includes less detail when enlarged. This is ideal for web pages and wallet-size pictures (the picture size is approximately 2.2×1.7 inches [43.2×55.8 mm]). The camera holds at least 24 pictures in this mode.

High (Hi)

★ ★   Produces color images at 640×480 pixels with standard compression. Pictures include greater detail and are snapshot size (approximately 3.3×4.4 inches [83.8×111.8 mm]). The camera holds at least 12 pictures in this mode.

Super High (S-Hi)

★★   Produces color images at 640×480 pixels with low compression. With less compression, Super High images are better for pictures that will be enlarged. The camera holds at least 6 snapshot size (approximately 3.3×4.4 inches [83.8×111.8 mm]) pictures in this mode.
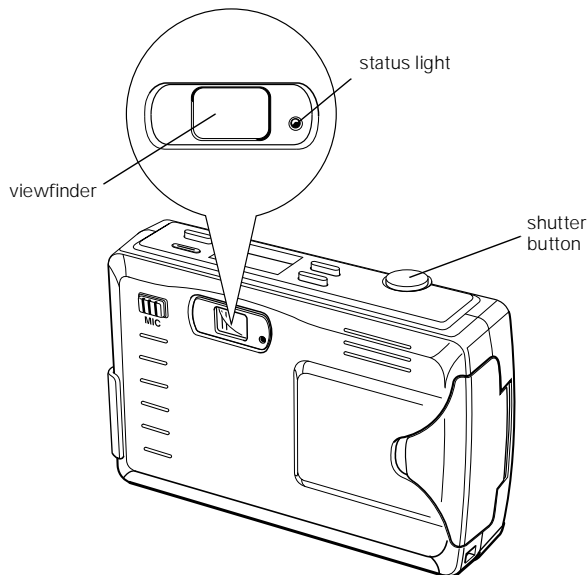
NOTE
You can switch between the settings and mix pictures of varying quality in the camera. The camera's capacity for storing images will vary accordingly. Depending on the content of your pictures, your camera may hold more than the numbers shown. As long as the display panel shows a number other than zero, you can continue taking pictures.

When you turn the camera off and back on, the image quality setting is the last setting used. When you replace the batteries, the image quality setting defaults to High.

Taking a Picture

You can capture an image with PhotoPC 550 as you would with any point-and-shoot camera: look through the viewfinder and snap the shutter. Follow these steps to take a picture:

1. Make sure you are at least 23.6 inches (60 cm) away from your subject.

2. Turn the camera on; the status light turns green.

3. Look straight through the viewfinder and center your subject within the cross-hairs.
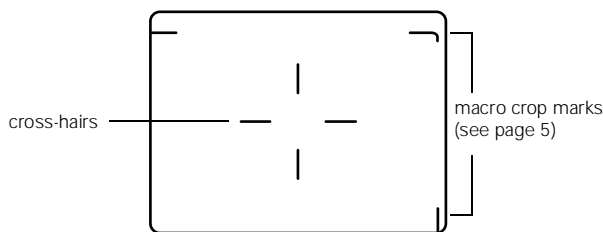
4. Hold the shutter button halfway down to lock the focus. The status light changes from green to orange.

NOTE
If you do not lock the focus, your pictures may be blurry.

5. Press the shutter button the rest of the way down to take the picture.

   Hold the camera still until it beeps and the status light starts flashing red. The flashing red light indicates that the camera has captured the image and is processing it. Processing takes about 8 seconds.

CAUTION
If you set the camera down while it is processing a picture, make sure you handle it carefully. The camera may lose your image if you set it down too hard.

When the light stops flashing and turns green, the image is saved and you can take another picture. Saved images remain in memory for at least a year, even when the camera is turned off and the batteries are removed.
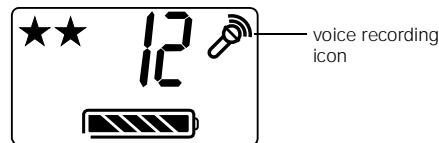
NOTE
Remember that the camera shuts off automatically after 60 seconds.

Recording Messages With the Microphone

You can use the built-in microphone to annotate your pictures with sound or record a voice message. Follow these steps:

1. Press the VOICE button until you hear the camera beep. The voice icon appears on the display panel and the status light flashes red.

2. Hold the camera 4 to 6 inches (10.2 to 15.2 cm) away and speak into the microphone. You can record a message up to six seconds long. When the recording time is up, the camera beeps twice.

After you record your message, the picture counter decreases by one. The message is "attached" to the last picture taken. Each message uses the same amount of memory as a high-resolution picture and is stored as a .wav file.

If you don't like the message you recorded, you can record a new message by pressing the VOICE button. PhotoPC 550 automatically records over the last message.

NOTE
You cannot erase a message only; you can only record over it. If you press the ERASE button, you erase both the image and the attached message.

If your camera is connected to your computer, you must use the computer's microphone to record messages.
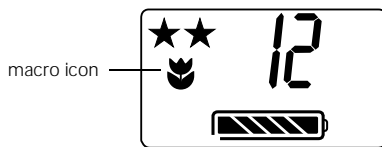
Using Macro Mode to Take Close-ups

You can use the camera's macro mode to take pictures as close as 3.9 inches (10 cm). The macro range is from 3.9 to 21.7 inches (10 to 55 cm). Follow these steps:
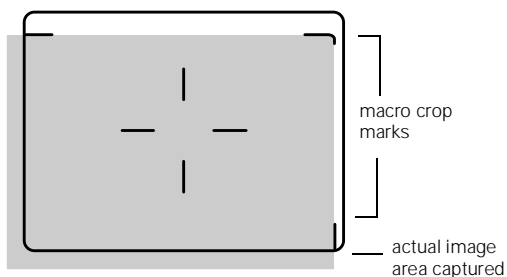
1. Turn the camera on.

2. Slide the macro switch so it is above the macro icon.

macro switch
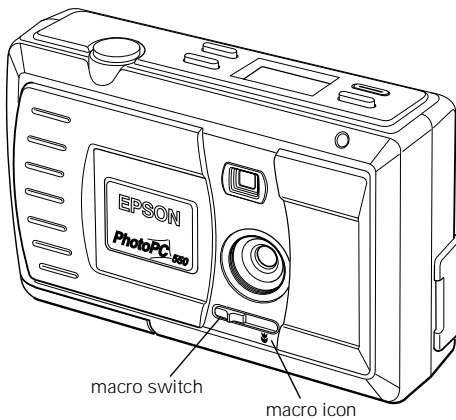
macro icon

3. The macro icon appears on the display panel.

macro icon

4. Center the image in the viewfinder and press the shutter button to capture it.

macro crop marks

actual image area captured

TIP
When centering your image, be sure to leave space around the image to compensate for any parallax shift (the difference between what you see in the viewfinder and the actual image captured).

5. To turn off macro mode, slide the macro switch to the left. The macro icon disappears from the display panel.

Taking Pictures in Low Light Conditions

You can use PhotoPC 550 in most indoor or low light settings. There is no need for a flash because of the camera's highly light sensitive CCD. A good rule of thumb is if you can read a book in the available light, you can take a picture with PhotoPC 550.

When taking pictures in low light conditions, be sure to hold the camera still until you hear it beep. The shutter speed may be as slow as 1/4 of a second in low light conditions. You can use a tripod to hold the camera steady. See "Using a Tripod" on page 6.

Taking Pictures With the Self Timer

Setting the self timer adds about a 10-second delay between the time you press the shutter button and when the picture is taken.

Follow these steps to take a picture with the timer:

1. Secure the camera on a flat surface or on a tripod. (See the next section for information on attaching the camera to a tripod.)

2. Turn on the camera and wait until the status light turns green.

3. Press the SELF TIMER button. The timer icon appears on the display panel.
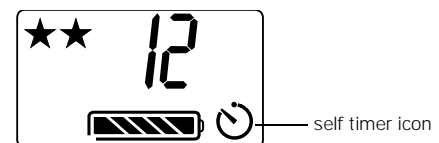
self timer icon

4. Press the shutter button. The timer icon on the display panel flashes slowly for about 8 seconds. Then the icon and the timer light (on the front of the camera) flash rapidly for about 2 seconds before the shutter is released.

   The camera beeps when the image is captured. The status light continues to flash red as PhotoPC 550 processes the image. When the status light stops flashing and turns green, you can take another picture.

The timer automatically turns off after the image is processed or if you turn the camera off and back on.

Using a Tripod

For portraits or other studio pictures, you can attach your PhotoPC 550 to a tripod. Follow these steps:

1. Assemble and set up the tripod by following the manufacturer's instructions. Make sure the tripod is well-balanced on a flat surface.

2. Find the opening for the tripod screw on the bottom of your camera. Carefully place the camera on the tripod. Screw the camera on until it is firmly in place.

tripod socket
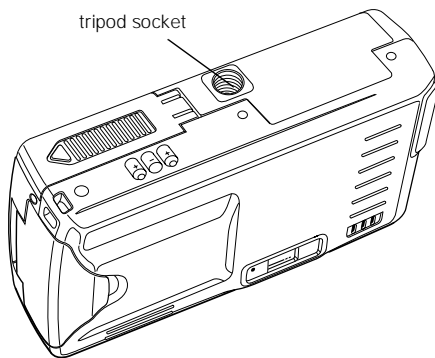
3. Adjust the tripod to view your subject as desired.

Erasing Pictures

You erase the last picture taken (along with any accompanying message); you can also erase all the pictures in the camera at once.

NOTE
You cannot erase a message only.

To erase the last picture taken, hold down the ERASE button for 2 seconds until you see the erase icon on the display panel. The icon flashes and the status light on the back of the camera is red while the picture is erased.

erase icon

TIP
Be sure to press the indentation in the center of the ERASE button. You may need to press it with your fingernail instead of your finger.

To erase all the pictures in the camera, hold down the ERASE button and then press the SELF TIMER button for 2 seconds or until you see the erase icon.

Connecting the Camera

Note the following before you start:

❏ If you have the optional AC adapter, you can conserve battery life by using it when you connect the camera to your computer.

❏ The camera's auto shut-off feature takes place after 5 minutes of inactivity when the camera is connected to your computer. To turn the camera back on, close the lens cover and then open it again. (You can change the auto shut-off time period if you want.)

❏ When you connect the camera, make sure your system is not exposed to sources of electromagnetic interference, such as stereo speakers or the base units of cordless telephones.

Make sure you have the serial cable that came with your camera. Before you start, turn off the camera and your computer. Then follow these steps:

1. Locate a serial port on the back of your computer. You may have two serial ports labeled COM1 and COM2, or the ports may be labeled with icons. If you have two serial ports available, use COM1 (port 1) to connect your camera.

NOTE
If you have a 25-pin serial port, you can use a 9- to 25-pin adapter.

2. Line up the serial connector on the cable with one of the serial ports on your computer, and insert the connector. Then tighten the screws.
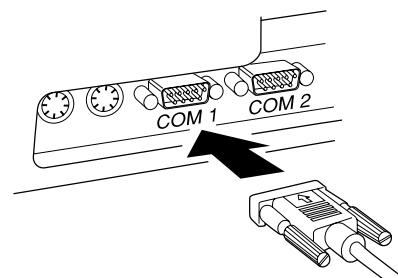
3. Open the connector cover on the side of the camera.

serial port

DC port
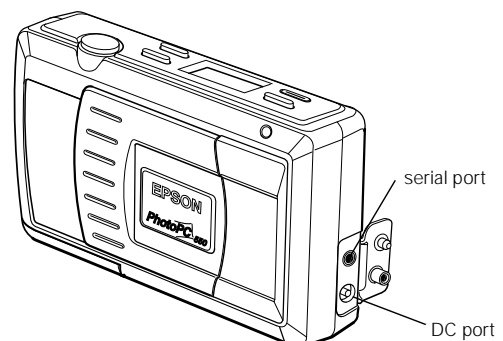
4. Insert the other end of the cable into the camera's serial port.

5. Turn on the camera and your computer system. The connect icon appears on the display panel.

connect icon
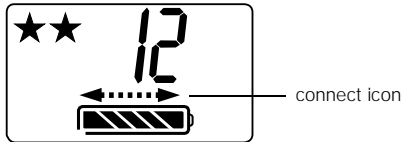
Downloading Images and Sounds

PhotoPC 550 provides several different ways to transfer your pictures from the camera to your computer.

Make sure you've installed the PhotoPC 550 software, following the instructions in the *User's Guide*. Then connect the camera to your computer as described in the previous section. You can download your images using Camio Viewer, Image Expert, or the TWAIN driver.

Using Camio Viewer

The Camio Viewer, which runs only under Windows 95 and Windows NT 4.0, is a quick and easy way to get pictures from the camera. You can transfer all images and sounds to your computer, or just display the pictures in the camera. Then you can drag a picture directly into a presentation or document. Follow these steps:

1. Double-click the camera icon 📷 on the right end of the Windows 95 Taskbar. You see the Camio Viewer Startup Options dialog box.

2. Choose one of the following options:

   ❏ View images in the Camera
   Displays a filmstrip of your pictures.

   ❏ Copy all images from the Camera to the Computer
   Transfers your pictures and sounds to an album (folder) on your hard disk drive.

   ❏ Copy all images and delete them from the Camera
   Transfers your pictures and sounds to an album (folder) on your hard disk drive and deletes them from the camera.

3. If you chose Copy all images, click OK to copy your pictures to an album named with the current date. Or, type a new name for the album and click OK. Your pictures are transferred one by one. They appear in a strip of thumbnail images.

indicates audio
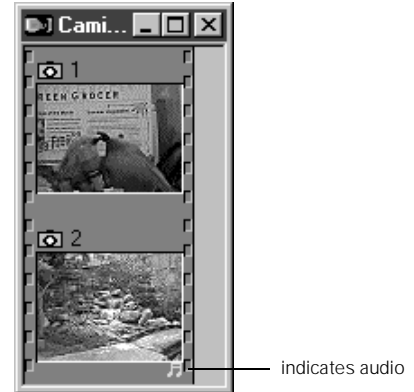
4. If you chose View images in the Camera, click OK. Your pictures appear in a strip of thumbnail images (see the illustration for step 3).

5. Open the application and document where you want to use the picture.

NOTE
Dragging and dropping an image with the Camio Viewer works only with OLE 2.0-compliant applications running under Windows 95 and Windows NT 4.0.

You cannot drag and drop sound into your document.

6. Click the picture you want to use. Without releasing the mouse button, drag the picture to your document. When your pointer is over the location where you want the picture to appear, release the mouse button. The picture is downloaded from the camera, and it appears in your document.

   If you want to edit or modify the picture, double-click it to bring up the Image Expert menus and toolbar. For more information about the Camio Viewer, choose Quick Tour from the Image Expert Help menu in Window 95 or Windows NT.

NOTE
When you drag and drop with the Camio Viewer, your picture is embedded into your document and also automatically saved to the default Image Expert directory under the current date.
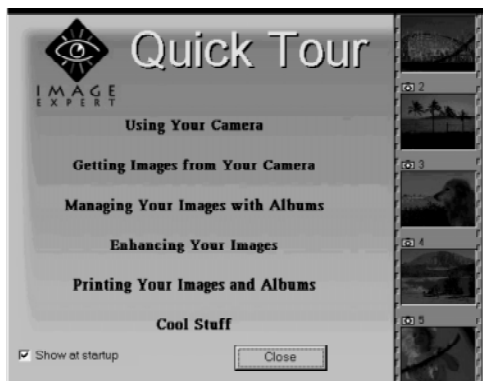
Using Image Expert

Image Expert lets you view small thumbnail images of your pictures, and then quickly transfer them to an album (folder) on your hard disk drive.

NOTE
Although these instructions and the accompanying illustrations show Image Expert running under Windows 95, you can follow the same steps on a Windows 3.1 or Windows NT system.

1. Start Image Expert. Under Windows 95, click Start, and then point to Programs, PhotoPC 550, Image Expert.
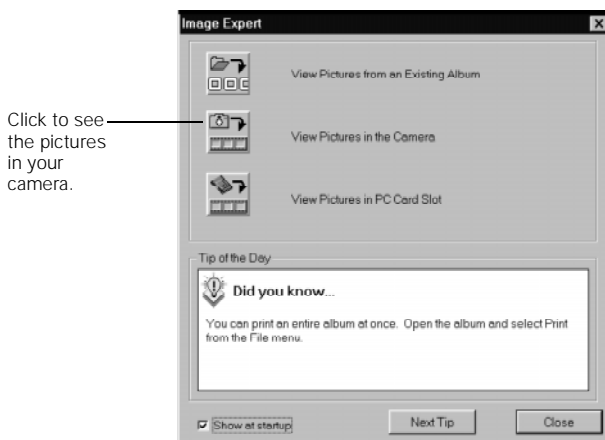
   If you're using Windows 95 and Windows NT, you see a Quick Tour screen like the following:

   If you're using Windows 3.1, skip to step 3.

2. Click on any of the topics for an animated demonstration of what you can do with PhotoPC 550 and Image Expert.

   To skip the tour and download your pictures and sound, click Close. You see a window like the following:
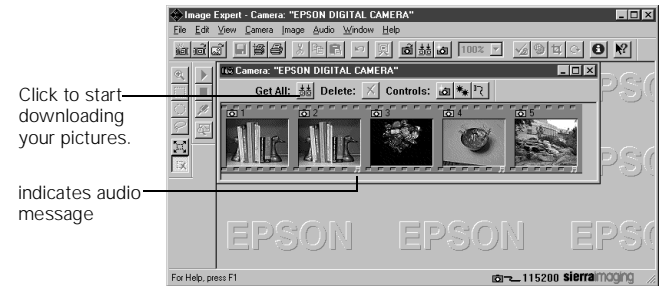

   Click to see the pictures in your camera.

NOTE
To open Quick Tour again, select Quick Tour from the Help menu.

3. Click View Pictures in the Camera. You see a window displaying "filmstrips" of your images. (If you see an error message instead, follow the instructions on page 9.)

   Click to start downloading your pictures.

   indicates audio message

4. Click Get All to transfer all the images. You can also click an individual image to select it. The Get All button changes to Get Selected.

NOTE
To select a range of images, hold down the Shift key while you click.

To select several images individually, hold down the Ctrl key while you click on the images.
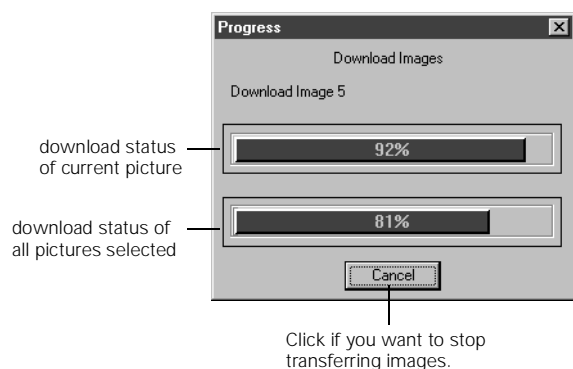
   You see a Select Album window like the following:

   Type here if you want to rename your album.

   Image Expert will automatically create an album (folder) for your pictures with the current date as its name. You can type a new name for the album or choose an existing album.

5. Click Open to begin transferring your pictures. A window like the following appears to show you the progress of each image.

download status of current picture

download status of all pictures selected

Click if you want to stop transferring images.

NOTE
If you select only one picture to download, there is only one status bar.

6. When you're finished, close the filmstrip window. You see a message asking if you want to delete all the files in the camera.

7. If you want to make room for more pictures in your camera, click Yes.

Your pictures are displayed in an album of thumbnails. You can double-click an image to open it in Image Expert. You can display your images one by one; edit, print, and copy them to diskettes; or place them in your documents and presentations.

You can also use the Help menu for more information.

What To Do if You See an Error Message

When you click the button to view images in the camera, you may see a message like the following:
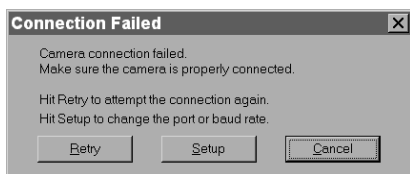

Follow these steps to make sure your camera is connected correctly:

1. Make sure the camera is turned on and has not shut off automatically. If it has, turn it off and then back on again by closing and opening the lens cover.

2. Check the cable and make sure the connections to the camera and computer are secure.

3. Make sure your batteries have enough power or your AC adapter is connected.

4. Click Retry. If you see the Connection Failed message again, click Setup.

You see the following dialog box:
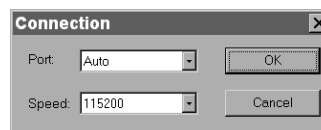
5. Select another port if necessary. In most cases, it is best to leave the Port setting at Auto because Image Expert can detect the camera connection automatically.

If you have a serial device connected to one port and an internal modem on the other, you can try setting the Port to COM3 or COM4.

6. Select a slower speed. Image Expert automatically chooses the fastest speed that works with your system, but this may actually be too fast for the configuration of your port. If you are using Windows 95 or Windows NT, try lowering the speed to 57600. If you are using Windows 3.1, try lowering the speed to 57600 or 38400. You may need to experiment to choose the best speed for your system.

7. When you are finished, click OK.

Getting Images Into TWAIN Applications

If you use Photoshop or other TWAIN-compliant applications, you can transfer your pictures directly into your program from the camera. Follow the steps below.

NOTE
If your images have audio messages attached to them, you must use Image Expert to download them. TWAIN does not support audio transfer.

1. Start your application.

2. From the File menu, choose Import, then Select TWAIN_32 Source (or Acquire, then TWAIN_32 Select Source).

NOTE
You may need to select TWAIN instead of TWAIN_32 in some applications, especially those in Windows 3.1.

3. Choose PhotoPC 550 as the TWAIN source.

4. From the File menu, choose Import, then TWAIN_32 (or Acquire, then TWAIN_32 Acquire).

5. The PhotoPC 550 Twain Driver window appears, with "thumbnail" images of your pictures, as shown below. (If you do not see the Twain Driver window, it may be in the

background. Minimize your application window to see the Twain Driver window. If you see a message that says The Camera Is Not Responding, see the following section.)

Click to transfer your picture(s).
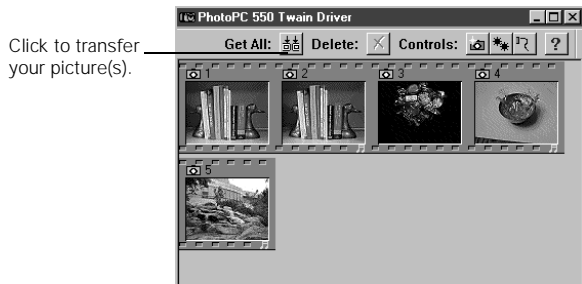
6. Select the picture you want and click Get Selected to transfer the picture. Or, click Get All to transfer all the pictures.

NOTE
Some applications import only one picture at a time.

7. If you want to delete images from your camera, select the image and then click Delete ✕.

8. If necessary, click Close to exit and return to your application.

    You see the imported picture or pictures in the work area.

What To Do if the Camera Is Not Responding

When you try to acquire pictures from the camera, you may see a screen like the following:

Follow these steps to fix your camera connection:

1. Make sure the camera is turned on and has not shut off automatically. If it has, turn it off and then back on again by closing and opening the lens cover.

2. Check the cable and make sure the connections to the camera and computer are secure.

3. Make sure your batteries have enough power, or your AC adapter is connected.

4. Click Test Connection. If you see the same screen, continue with step 5.

5. Select another port if necessary. In most cases, it is best to leave the Port setting at Auto.

    If you have a serial device connected to one port and an internal modem on the other, you can try COM3 or COM4.

6. Select a slower speed. You may need to experiment to choose the best speed.

7. Click Test Connection again. If you still don't see your pictures, see your *User's Guide* for more troubleshooting tips.

Using SmartMedia Cards

SmartMedia cards increase the camera's picture storage capacity as shown in the following table.

Number of pictures (minimum capacity)

| Image Quality	Internal Memory	2MB Card	4MB Card
Standard	24	73	147
High	12	36	73
Super High	6	18	36

NOTE
When a SmartMedia card is installed in the camera, images are stored on the card instead of the camera's internal memory.
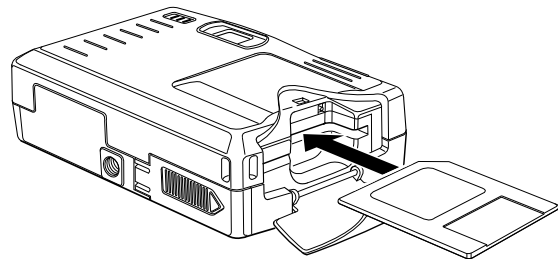
Installing a Storage Card

Before you start, make sure the camera is turned off. Then follow these steps:

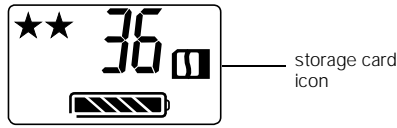1. Open the storage card slot cover on the side of the camera.
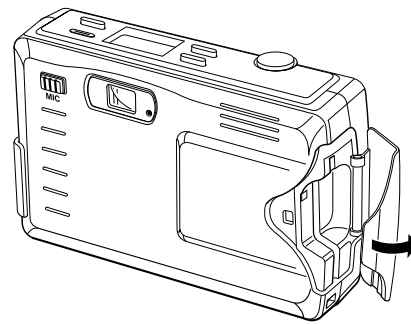
2. Insert the card all the way into the storage card slot.

3. Close the storage card slot cover.

4. Turn the camera on. The card icon and the number of pictures you can store in the storage card appears on the camera's display panel.
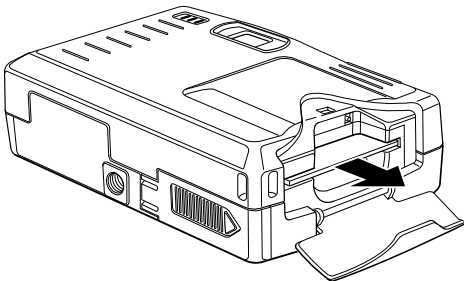

storage card icon

NOTE
When a storage card is installed, you may notice a delay between the time you press the shutter button and when the camera beeps. To avoid blurring, make sure you hold the camera still until it beeps.

Removing a Storage Card

Make sure the camera is turned off. Then open the cover to the storage card slot and gently pull out the storage card.

When you are not using your SmartMedia card, always store it in its case or inside the camera to avoid damaging it.

CAUTION
Never remove the card while the camera is accessing it. Data in the card may be lost or damaged. Avoid using or storing the card in dusty places, in direct sunlight, or in places that become extremely hot or humid.

Getting Images and Sound From a Card to Your Computer

There are two ways you can transfer the pictures on a SmartMedia card to your computer:

❏ Use the serial port on your computer (this is the same method as transferring pictures stored in the camera's memory; see the *User's Guide*)

❏ Use a PCMCIA adapter

A PCMCIA adapter allows you to access images stored on SmartMedia cards directly from your computer.

Using a PCMCIA Adapter

To use the PCMCIA adapter, your computer must be equipped with a PCMCIA slot. Refer to the instructions that came with your adapter or follow these steps to use an adapter:
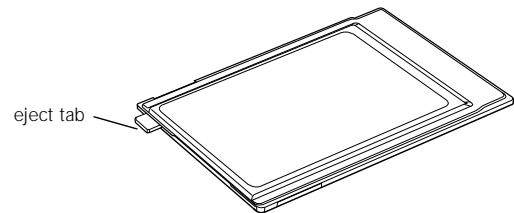
1. Insert the storage card all the way into the adapter:
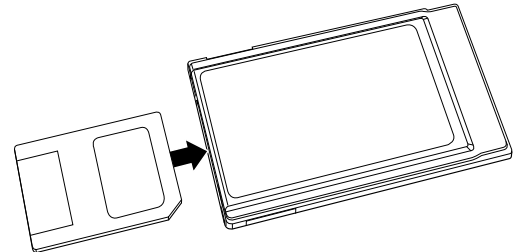
2. Insert the adapter into your computer's PCMCIA slot:
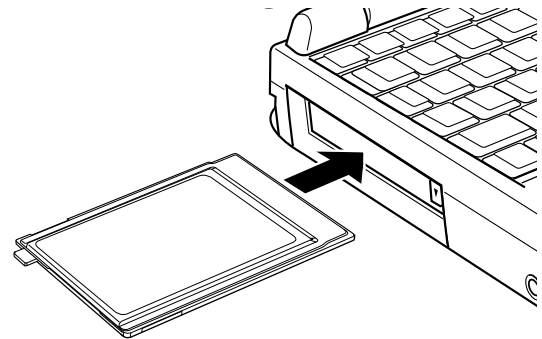
To remove the storage card from the adapter, press the eject tab at the end of the card.

eject tab

Formatting a Storage Card

Most SmartMedia cards are already formatted when you buy them. If you are unable to add images to your SmartMedia card, you may need to format the card. Follow these steps:

1. Install the storage card in the camera.

2. Hold down the ERASE button and then press the S-Hi/Hi/S button for 2 seconds or until the pictures remaining number changes.

NOTE
If you are unable to format a Simple Technology card, contact the Technical Support Department at (800) 4-SIMPLE.

Maintenance

Cleaning the Camera

❏ Use a clean, dry cloth to wipe the camera free of dust.

❏ Don't use harsh or abrasive cleaners. Don't use liquid or aerosol cleaners.

❏ To clean the lens, first blow off any loose dust or dirt. Then breathe on the lens and wipe off all moisture with a soft, lint-free cloth or lens cleaning tissue. To avoid scratching the lens, don't press too hard.

❏ If necessary, clean the battery contacts with a dry cloth.

Storing the Camera

❏ Keep the lens covered (power turned off) and store the camera in a carrying case or bag when you're not using it.

❏ Avoid sudden temperature changes, which can cause moisture to condense on the camera. Keep the camera in a case or bag if you need to move it from a cold environment to a warm one. Allow time for the camera and its optional accessories to adjust to temperature changes before using them.

❏ When the camera is not used for long periods of time, remove the batteries and store them at a low temperature in a dry location. This prevents camera damage from battery leaks or corrosion.

Do not store the camera in the following locations:

❏ Where it will be exposed to direct sunlight, for example, on a car dashboard

❏ Near bright sources of light or high humidity

❏ Near heat sources or in a closed car or trunk

❏ In areas of excessive dirt or dust

❏ Where it will be exposed to strong vibrations or magnetic fields

Optional Accessories

EPSON offers several options for the PhotoPC 550.

❏ PhotoPC AC adapter (B867038) for use with any 110/120V electrical outlet

❏ PhotoPC NiMH power pack (B818051)

❏ PhotoPC NiMH battery pack (B818061)

❏ 3.3V SSFDC or SmartMedia storage cards

You can contact EPSON Accessories at (800) 873-7766 (U.S. sales only). In Canada, please call (800) 873-7766 for dealer referral. SmartMedia storage cards and adapters are also available from Simple Technology® at (800) 4-SIMPLE.

Related Documentation

CPD4370   PhotoPC 550 User's Guide