

## Setting Up the OM-D EM-1



The EM-1 has more option than you can shake a stick at. As I was getting to know the camera, I noticed how easy it would be to duplicate functions let alone making it complicated to reset everything when needed. And there are unintended consequences when making many customizations - changing one function may not allow something else to work as designed.

Products that can be configured to user preferences are nice, but they are a double edged sword.

- If someone else uses your product or you need assistance with figuring out a situation, can they figure out your set-up without hindrance.
- If you make many customizations, can you remember what is assigned to do your customized functions.
- If you have to do a reset (which happens all too often with software/computers), how easily can you make all of the customized changes so you can get back to operate the product as you desired, or can you adjust to the default settings if needed?

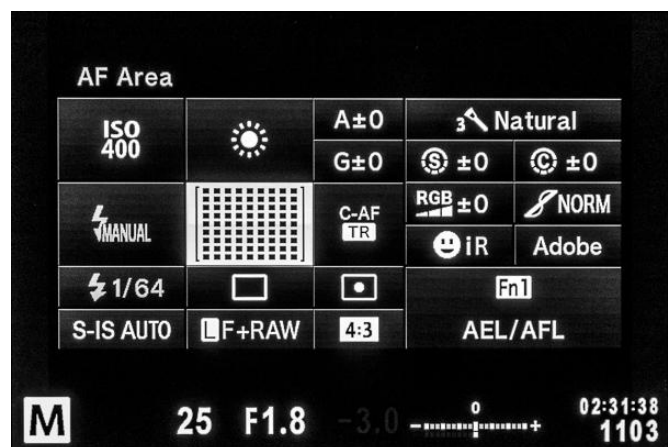
For these reasons - I'm more inclined to learn how the designers originally set-up the product and use the product this way, while only making minimal changes.

Any or all of these changes are all subjective to the individual user, so any discussion about right, wrong, my way or the highway, or my way is better than yours really doesn't apply. I'm not only showing you some the change I've made but why I chose to implement some of the way I did.

The DP Review's "[USER Guide: Getting the most out of the Olympus EM-5](#)" is mostly applicable to the EM-1 as well, so it is very good place to start. My write-up here is complimentary and doesn't replace what they've done. I have reiterated the Super Control Panel as I still often use it. A couple of caveats about their user guide, the buttons and dials are a little different on the EM-1 (and covered pretty much here), the Faster Viewfinder is not applicable to the EM-1.

### Super Control Panel (SCP)

A great thing about Olympus digital cameras is the Super Control Panel (SCP) - from this panel menu you can quickly see current settings and in a few clicks you change many settings which is far better than scrolling through menus. Settings include : ISO, Flash mode, Flash intensity, sequential shooting, white balance, picture modes, sharpness, contrast, saturation, graduation, B&W filter,



Picture tone, Color space, Button function assignments, face priority, metering modes, aspect ratio, AF mode, and image stabilization.

### SCP Set Up

To set up SCP so that when you push the OK button (center button the multi-selector on the back of the camera) go - Menu button > Custom Menu (the gears) > Menu D > Display/Sound/PC > Control Settings. And in each of the modes you shoot in, make sure Live SCP is checked. There are also other options for each mode, if you leave these checked and do not see the SCP when pressing OK, press the Info button to rotate screens to get to the SCP.

Wow- why would you need anything else? For many, the SCP is more than enough. For others, when shooting it is very handy to make changes without moving your eye from the view finder making quick changes without breaking stride.

Hence - 25 buttons, dials, and levers on the EM-1 camera body, making many default changes from the camera body possible! Twenty-five! And we want customization???

### Buttons, Dials, And Levers

Olympus spent some time on these, and they really seem to make a lot of sense at the defaults.

#### "The Lever"

The EM-1 has the "Lever" (I guess Olympus could not find a better name - located by the AEL/AFL button) that changes several functions of the camera when moved from position 1 to position 2. The "Lever" also has 5 modes making various possibilities available. A unique and different concept from any other camera I've used - but implemented extremely well - well enough that I have chosen to use it. I currently have the "Lever" at Mode 1 (default setting).



The functions of the front and rear dials change depending on which position the "Lever" is in, 1 or 2 - and the shooting mode you are in. Using Aperture, Shutter or Program priority modes with the "Lever" in position 1 the front dial changes aperture or shutter speed respective to the priority mode and the rear dial changes the exposure compensation.

#### ISO and White Balance Settings

By moving the "Lever" to position 2 I have instant access to make ISO changes with the front dial and WB changes through the rear dials, including in Manual priority mode, without removing my eye from the viewfinder.

It took me little time to get used to. This works very well because ISO and WB are settings I change a lot less often other settings, so although not as nice as some other pro cameras with dedicated individual buttons - this is very functional. I do need to get in the habit of moving the lever back to position 1 after making an ISO or WB changes so that the dials return to the defaults I expect them to be at.

However, the choices for the "Lever" also effect the HDR and AF/Metering buttons of the top left side of the camera! And you can make changes to how the "Lever" effects changes making the camera even more customizable (complicated?).

The HDR and AF/Metering buttons on the top left side of the camera are multi-functional themselves.



### *HDR and Bracketing*

When the "Lever" is set in position 1 and with a press the HDR button:

- the front dial changes between in-camera HDR photos, 3-frames 2.0 EV, 5-frames 2.0 EV, 7-frames 2.0 EV, 3-frames 3.0 EV, 5-frames 3.0 EV bracketing modes, and also turns on High Speed Sequential shooting
- the rear dial changes from single image, high speed sequential, low speed sequential, or set the self-timer for 12 seconds, two seconds, or set a time interval and the number of photos to be taken with the rear dial.

When the "Lever" is set in position 2 and a press the HDR button:

- the front dial changes Auto Exposure (AE BKT), White Balance (WB BKT), Flash Level (FL BKT), ISO (ISO BKT), or ART (ART BKT) bracketing.
- the rear dial changes and turns off/on bracketing and changes between 2 - 7 frames with 0.3 EV, 0.7 EV, or 1.0 EV changes between frames (except 7 frames only goes up to .7EV).

### *Auto Focus and Metering modes*

When the "Lever" is set in position 1 and with a press the AF button:

- the front dial changes between ESP, Center-Weighted, Spot, Spot Hilight, and Spot Shadow metering modes.
- the rear dial changes between S-AF (Single Auto Focus, locks focus once,), C-AF (continuously focus until the focus button is released), Manual Foucs, S-AF MF (locks focus and allows manual focus fine tuning), and C-AF TR (consciously focus and tracks subject)

When the "Lever" is set in position 2 and a press the AF button:

- the front dial changes the flash exposure compensation
- the rear dial changes between flash modes, Fill in, Red-eye reduction and Fill in, Flash Off, 2nd Curtain, Manual changes to flash intensity (press the Info button) then use then use the rear dial to adjust the flash from Full to 1/64th power.

So with the Lever in Position 1 and pretty much default settings I have all of the changes I need to make often, and with the Lever in Position 2 changes I make more occasionally are at my grasp!

Yet there is more - here are the buttons (the number in parenthesis is the page # reference in the manual), what they do at default, and that can be assigned any of 25 other functions (listed on page 99 and 100 of the manual) -

### **Fn1 Button, (52), AF Targets,**

- pressing the Fn1, Info buttons allows you use
  - the front dial to change between face/pupil focusing priorities ) five choices on page 53 of the manual)
  - pressing the up or down arrows of the multi-selector changes between tall and small AF targets.
  - the rear dial to change the grouping of AF Targets
  - use the arrow buttons you can move the AF target,

You can also access changing AF targets by pressing one of the arrow buttons of the rear multi-selector switch (without using the Fn1 button! The duplication of function makes one of these two items ideal for customization if needed.

### **Fn2 Button, (23, 49), Multi-function > Zoom, Highlight Shadow, Color Creator, Aspect Ratio**

If you don't use any of these functions then this button is ideal for customization.

**One Touch WB, (57)** (Top button on front of the camera body) Used to take a photo of a white balance target and set the camera to the corresponding color balance (this is the only means by which One Touch WB is quickly available, other options are to use one of the customizable WB settings.)

**Preview Button, (39)** (Bottom button on front of the camera body) Used to preview depth of field through the lens (not something I use)



**AEL/AFL button**, (32, 49, 98), This button can set to either lock exposure or focus when pushed. (I'm a left eyed shooter so this button is too close to the viewfinder and I have to move my face away from the viewfinder to use it)

**Arrow Pad**, (31), Moves the cursor or selections in the direction you choose, and is also used to move the AF target position on most modes - used in conjunction with the Info button makes all AF options available)

And then there are the buttons on the battery grip as well as a button on some lenses that can be reconfigured.

So if I want to assign other functions:

- the Fn1 button is a candidate since all default functions are accessible through the arrow keys.
- the Fn2 button is something I very seldom use so it is a candidate for reassignment
- the One Touch WB is nice but since I normally used the generalized WB settings, I do not set a customized WB all that often, and I can easily use one of the 4 custom WB options to set a customized white balance, this button is also a possible candidate for reassignment but further down on my customization priority list.
- the Preview button is a likely candidate as well.
- the AEL/AFL button will not get used no matter what I use it for, unless I intend to use it while not looking through the viewfinder. (located on the back of the camera by the viewfinder)
- The arrow pad is locked in - I'm not changing it.

### **Back Button focus.**

This allows me to set up one button that allows to me to use the best of S-AF and C-AF without having to switch between the two focusing modes. And if I hand my camera off to someone else, I just set S-AF and they won't have any issues!

This requires me to put the camera in C-AF mode, change C-AF to Mode 4, (Custom Menu/gears, Menu AF/MF, AEL/AFL, C-AF, to Mode 4) which makes the AEL/AFL button the button for focusing and not the shutter button! This setup also requires that I have release priority set for C-AF. Custom Menu (gears), Menu C Release, Rls Priority C - On.

**Image Stabilization** - I also have Image stabilization so that it turns on when the shutter button is pressed halfway, Custom Menu C, **Release, Half Way RLS** with IS, On.

With back button focusing I can shoot C-AF just by pressing the AEL/AFL button and following my subject while pressing the shutter button to take the shot when I want, or I can release the button at any time focus is locked, recompose, then press the shutter button. Repeat as required! It takes a while to get used to but is excellent.

Oh, but wait. I stated earlier that the AEL/AFL was a problem for me to use. Let's see...

The Fn1 button is in the ideal place for back button focus, and the default Fn1 function is easily duplicated though the arrow keys!

So now I just reassign the AEL/AFL function to the Fn1 button - Custom Menu (gears). Menu B Button/Dial/Lever, Button Function, Fn1 Function, and set AEL/AFL, press Ok.

(BTW- unless I assign something to the AEL/AFL button it will act just like the Fn1 button - but if it reassigned herein lies one of the things I mentioned to begin with - "can you remember what all is assigned to do your customized functions.")

And, whenever I set the camera to S-AF or Manual focus none of these settings apply! (except the image stabilization.) So up to now I have only made 1 customization.

## Focus Peaking

I use manual focus and sometimes use manual focus lenses, and the focus Peaking is pretty nice. So I assign that to Preview Button. a button I do not use. This is the bottom button on the front of the camera, easily accessible, out of the way, not likely be pushed by anything, next to the lens to help me remember they are associated, and not something I'd use otherwise.

Custom Menu (gears). Menu B Button/Dial/Lever, Button Function, Preview Button icon, and Peaking.

I also have **Manual Focus Assist Magnify** turned on: Custom Menu (gears), Menu A AF/MF, MF Assist, Peaking - On, Magnify - On.

There is also an option to change **focus peaking color** to black or white. Custom Menu D, Display/Sound/PC, Peaking Settings. I have white.

## Menu settings - set once and forgot about

**AF Illuminator** - An LED throws a beam of light (if needed) trying to light the subject so the camera can focus. I keep this off as it is very distracting to subjects. Custom Menu A, AF Illuminator, Off

**Live View Boost** - I keep Live View Boost off, it gives a better idea of the image I'm getting ready to take. Custom Menu C, Live View Boost, Off.

**Super Control Panel** - View and change many settings. To set up SCP so that when you push the OK button (center button the multi-selector on the back of the camera) go Custom Menu D > Display/Sound/PC > Control Settings. And I only set the P/A/S/M to only Live SCP. Keeping the others at the default as I won't use them and these are settings I won't have to worry about resetting.

**Info Settings** - Custom Menu D, Display/Sound/PC > Info Settings > options. Choose which information screens are shown when in review mode and Live View. I check all options as it only a quick push of the Info button to move past screen if I don't want to see it. Note: These same options are available for viewing through the EVF.

**Sound** - Beeps when focus is locked. Custom Menu D, Speak icon. When using a new lens I keep the sound on until I can know when the when the camera has locked focused. Otherwise it is turned.

**EV Step** - Custom Menu E, Exp/ISO, Ev Step, 1/3. The same for ISO. If working in a studio this changes to match equipment being used.

ISO Step - 1/3 EV to match other EV adjustments. Custom Menu E, ISO Step.

**Auto ISO** - I don't use Auto ISO. It is a setting I can and do control to minimize exposure changes that I do not want or expect. Just a personal thing. However I do set up the ISO-Auto Set in Custom Menu E, Expos./ISO just in case I inadvertently set the camera to Auto ISO at some point. High ISO 3200, Low ISO 200.

**Flash settings**, The speed at which the flash syncs. All available under Custom Menu F

*X-Sync*, 1/320. I want the fastest X-Synch speed available for the flash I use. Any other setting will just limit the possibilities.

*Slow Limit*, 30 (I often use Rear curtain sync and may want to use a very slow shutter speed with the flash firing at the end of the exposure)

**Keep Warm Color** - Custom Menu G, Color/WB, WB Auto Keep Warm Color, set to Off. Personal choice but the images are good without the extra warm balance.

**Color Space** - Custom Menu G, Color Space, Adobe RGB. The other option is sRGB which I'll use if I have to shoot many photos and need to quickly send them off. Quite a bit of my work is published in CMYK printing processes using color managed work flows and the extra gamut of Adobe RGB provides me the best flexibility in meeting my customers printing, needs which vary from job to job. But when you move into color managed work flows it can get really complicated, and since most viewing and printing of photographs uses sRGB, sRGB is a very valid choice and simplifies any color management work flow you may choose to use, if any at all - especially if you use a wide gamut color monitor.

**Camera/Flash Exposure Compensation** - The last setting in the Custom Menu F, Off - If set to on the exposure compensation for the camera will be added with the exposure compensation of the flash. When set off I Can control the ambient light recording as well as the flashes output on the subject.

**Copyright settings**,

Custom Menu H, Record/Erase, Copyright Settings, Copyright Info, On - this adds you name to the EXIF data of the photos.

**Artist Name/Copyright Name**, should self explanatory

### **Built-in EVF**

Custom Menu J, Built-In EVF Style, Mode 3 - I just like the photo as large as I can see it. Two other options with the information under the reduced sized photo.

**Info Settings**, set these the same as the LCD Info settings in Custom Menu D, Display/Sound/PC, Info settings. Just maintains consistency.

These options allow you to select which information screens you can see when in review mode and using the EVF. Settings include, Histogram, Highlights and shadows, Level Gauge, and basic information screen. I check all 4 as it just takes a quick press of the Info button to move onto the next screen.

~ ~ ~ *T H E E N D* ~ ~ ~

Will, not quite!

After all of these - this is just starting to scratch the surface of what is possible to set-up or change. There are about 148 menu items/options to use if you choose, and I've just pointed out less than 15% of what is possible. With the few changes I've pointed out (most of which are defaults) the camera could meet almost anyone's needs with no more than a couple of flicks, push of a button and turns of a wheel.

One of the other things many folks liked about Olympus cameras is the ability to set up several options and assign them to one of four settings called MySet, there are four of these. Once set you can then call MySet from the SCP or assign your MySet to a function button. The largest category of users I think this could benefit are those that shoot birds in flight. They want a specific selection of more than 10 different items to happen all in one setting - something ideal for a MySet.

For a detailed review of everything in the customization menu go to John Foster's web site  
www.biofos.com - [http://www.biofos.com/mft/omd\\_em1\\_settings.html](http://www.biofos.com/mft/omd_em1_settings.html)