

Metadata

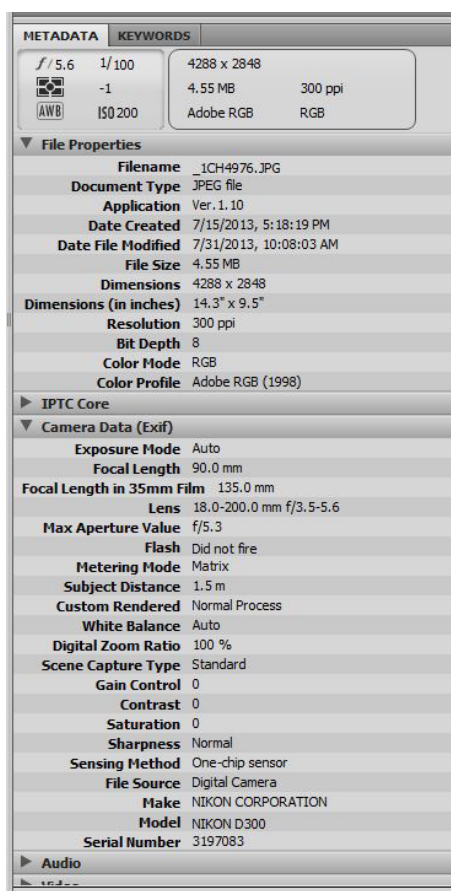
Info That's Not Part of the Picture

When you take a picture with your camera, the light that strikes the sensor gets converted into electrical signals and processed by the camera into a computer picture file. Most of the file size is taken with this picture information.

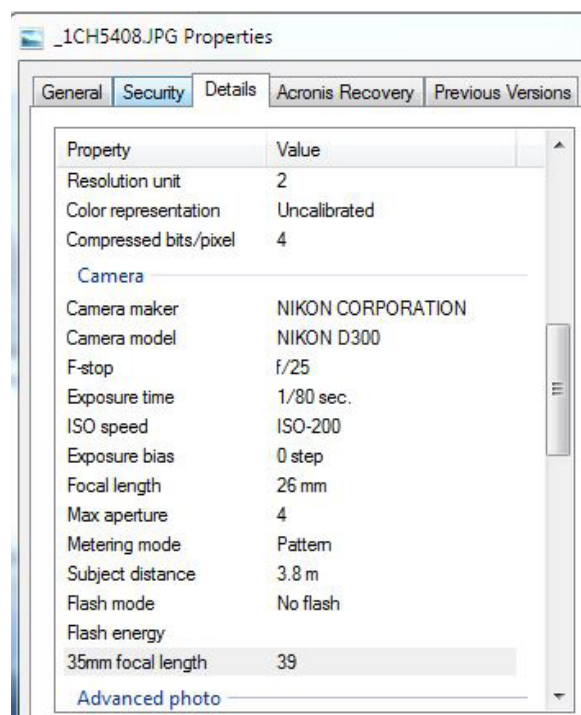
The camera also attaches extra data to the picture file that is not part of the picture. This data is called metadata. Metadata is data that is "outside" of the picture, but related to the picture. Examples of metadata are the date the picture was taken and the time the picture was taken. The camera gets this from the date and time you set in the camera's settings.

Other metadata is technical information about the picture, such as camera aperture setting, shutter speed, lens focal length, flash information, camera model number, and much more. Some cameras even have a built-in GPS device that will include metadata of the exact location where the picture was taken. Cool.

To see the metadata for a picture, click on the picture file. On a Windows computer, right-click and choose Properties. On a Mac, use Command-I to get info on the picture. Image software such as Photoshop, Picasa, and iPhoto will also show metadata.



Metadata attached to a picture file as shown in the image software Adobe Bridge.



Metadata information shown by the Properties command in Windows.