

N90s Buddy User Manual

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Introduction

N90s Buddy is a shareware replacement for Nikon's obsolete AC-2E/Sharp Wizard combination. N90s Buddy provides access to a number of camera customization features, adds additional creative shooting options, and provides easy access to the camera's built-in ability to record shooting data.

N90s Buddy is distributed under the shareware system. Unlike commercial software that you purchase at a retail location, shareware allows you to try before you buy. If you use N90s Buddy, please make sure you support this honor system and pay the minimal shareware fee of \$15. To make payment as simple as possible, N90s Buddy is available for purchase through Kagi's Shareware Registration service. Kagi accepts most major credit cards, First Virtual, check, or money orders. Please see <http://members.aol.com/khancock/pilot.html#register> for the latest details. After registering, you will receive a serial number via e-mail allowing you to remove the registration reminder.

Quick Start

Before continuing, make sure you have the necessary equipment:

- Pilot 1000, Pilot 5000, PalmPilot Personal, or PalmPilot Professional personal organizer
- PalmPilot serial cable
- Nikon MC-31 cable (or equivalent)
- Nikon N90s or F90x camera (N90s Buddy does not currently work with Nikon N90 cameras)

First, install N90s Buddy onto your PalmPilot.

Connect the PalmPilot serial cable to your PalmPilot, connect the MC-31 cable to the 10-pin remote terminal on the camera, and connect the two cables together.

To test that N90s Buddy can communicate with your camera, run N90s Buddy and select "Memo Holder Settings" from the "Camera" menu. Whenever the camera receives data from or transmits data to the PalmPilot, the "Organizer" icon will blink on the Nikon's LCD panel.

If everything is hooked up correctly, the "Memo Holder Settings" form should be displayed.

Camera Control

The Camera Control form allows you to control your N90s from your PalmPilot and turn on additional creative shooting options such as all-mode exposure bracketing and multiple exposures.

Once your PalmPilot is connected to the camera and both are turned on, clicking the “Update” button will update your camera’s current settings. Icons for flash, exposure compensation, or multiple exposure will appear only when the flash is attached or the exposure compensation or multiple exposure modes are activated.



The screenshot shows the 'Camera Control' interface. At the top, it displays 'Frame: 10', 'ISO: 100', and '3 exp' with a camera icon. Below that, it shows 'Lens [37]: 60mm f/2.8', '1/60" f/4 60mm', 'P - Program', and 'Matrix'. A 'Red-Eye Reduction' option is checked. At the bottom, there are several buttons: 'Update', 'M-Exp', 'Focus', 'Bracket', 'Done', and 'Trip Shutter'.

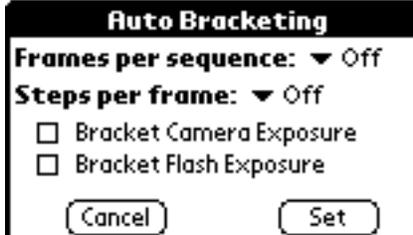
Clicking “Focus” will focus the camera if the camera is currently in auto-focus mode. Clicking “Trip Shutter” will fire one frame on the camera. The “Trip Shutter” button may also first focus the camera if the camera is out of focus and the camera is in focus-release priority. (See the Camera Options section for additional details.) After tripping the shutter, the current settings will automatically be updated. Note that if you are using a slow shutter speed, a serial error may be generated because the camera may be busy exposing the film. No need to panic.

Click “M-Exp” to put the camera in Multiple Exposure mode. N90s Buddy is currently limited to 10 exposures on a single frame. Once you have set the number of exposures per frame, the Camera Control form will show a reminder in the upper-right corner indicating multiple exposure mode is active and the number of exposures per frame (shown above).



The screenshot shows the 'Multiple Exposure' dialog box. It has a title bar 'Multiple Exposure'. Below the title bar, it says 'Exposures per frame: ▼ 2'. At the bottom, there are two buttons: 'Cancel' and 'Set'.

Click “Bracket” to put the camera in Auto Bracketing mode. Auto bracketing will automatically adjust the exposure between each of a sequence of frames. Auto Bracketing supports sequences of 2-11 frames with exposure steps of 1/3 to 2 stops per frame. Bracketing can be performed with camera exposure, flash exposure, or both. (Note: flash bracketing may not be available with all electronic flash systems. You should carefully check a test roll before relying on flash bracketing for any critical work.)



The screenshot shows the 'Auto Bracketing' dialog box. It has a title bar 'Auto Bracketing'. Below the title bar, it says 'Frames per sequence: ▼ Off' and 'Steps per frame: ▼ Off'. There are two checkboxes: 'Bracket Camera Exposure' and 'Bracket Flash Exposure'. At the bottom, there are two buttons: 'Cancel' and 'Set'.

Unlike many cameras which start auto bracketing sequences at the normal exposure and alternately shorten and lengthen subsequent exposures, the Nikon N90s exposes sequences starting at the shortest exposure and progresses to the longest exposure.

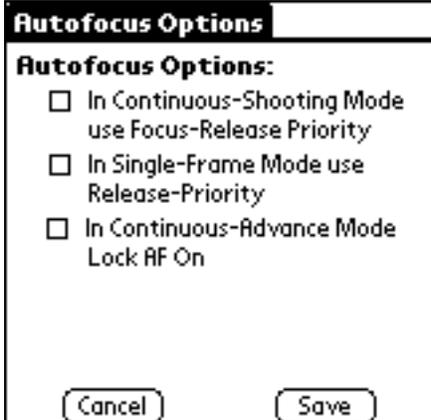
Autofocus Options

The Autofocus Options form allows you to customize a number of options relating to the camera's autofocus ability.

Normally when the camera is in Continuous Servo (Continuous-Shooting) mode, lightly-pressing the shutter release button starts the camera autofocus operation and fully depressing the shutter release button will fire the shutter regardless of whether the subject is in focus or not. The first option changes the camera from “release-priority” to focus-priority — the camera will not trip the shutter unless the subject is in focus.

When the camera is in single-frame mode, the subject normally must be in focus before the shutter will trip. The second option changes the camera's operation to work similar to the continuous-shooting mode — once the shutter release button has been fully depressed, the shutter will fire regardless of whether the subject is in focus.

The last option affects autofocus when the camera's motor drive has been set to either continuous low-speed shooting or continuous high-speed shooting. Normally, while the shutter release button is fully depressed, the camera will continually fire regardless of whether the subject remains in focus. If the “Lock AF On” option is checked, the camera will pause, if necessary, to re-lock focus on the subject.



The screenshot shows a menu titled "Autofocus Options" with a black header. Below the header, the text "Autofocus Options:" is followed by three options, each with an unchecked checkbox:

- In Continuous-Shooting Mode use Focus-Release Priority
- In Single-Frame Mode use Release-Priority
- In Continuous-Advance Mode Lock AF On

At the bottom of the menu are two buttons: "Cancel" and "Save".

Beep Options

The Beep Options form allows you to link an audible beep to various camera operations:

- Any time an error occurs with the film transport system (no film, end of film, jam, etc.)
- During the self-timer countdown
- Whenever an exposure error occurs or when there is insufficient light to make a proper exposure.
- When the subject becomes in focus.



The screenshot shows a menu titled "Beep Options" with a black header. Below the header, the text "Beep:" is followed by four options, each with a checkbox:

- On Film Error
- During Self-Timer
- On Exposure Error
- Twice when in Focus

At the bottom of the menu are two buttons: "Cancel" and "Save".

Camera Options

The Camera Options form allows you to customize a number of camera operations.

The Dual Release options controls how two cameras will operate when the cameras are connected via a MC-23 Connecting Cord. You may choose from Independent, Simultaneous, Alternate, Disconnect release modes.

The Meter On Seconds option sets the duration that the LCD backlighting and meter will remain on once activated.

The Normal Flash Speed option sets the slowest shutter speed to which the flash will sync. Note that the camera's "Slow Sync" flash mode will allow sync speeds down to 30 seconds.

The Long Exposures option allows you to switch between Bulb setting (default) and Time. N90s Buddy currently does not support using the Pilot to set timed exposures.

The ISO Priority option allows you to switch between Manual (default) and DX setting. Under Manual mode, the ISO speed set by the command dial will override any DX-coded film speed. Under DX mode, any DX-coded film will override the ISO speed set by the command dial.

Lastly, the Command Dial settings allows you to control whether the command dial increments or decrements the current camera setting which turned clockwise.



The screenshot shows a menu titled "Camera Options" with a list of settings. At the bottom are "Cancel" and "Save" buttons.

Setting	Value
Dual Release:	Independent
Meter On Seconds (4-64):	30
Normal Flash Speed:	1/60"
Long Exposures:	Bulb
ISO Priority:	Manual
Command Dial:	Normal

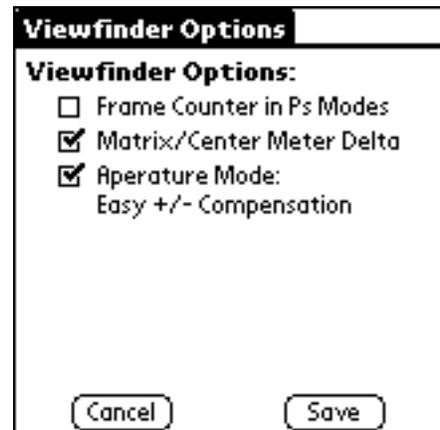
Viewfinder Options

The Viewfinder Options form allows you to turn on additional viewfinder features:

Normally when the camera is set to one of the Vari-Program exposure modes, the lower-right of the viewfinder shows which setting is active (Lo, rE, HF, LA, SL, SP, or CU). You may instead substitute a frame counter by checking the first option.

The second option will show a EV delta between the camera's programmed exposure when measured with Matrix Metering verses the exposure when measured with Center-weighted metering.

The last option is especially useful for photographers who shoot the majority of their shots using Aperture priority mode. When the "Easy +/- Compensation" mode is turned on, turning the command dial clockwise increases the exposure for the current frame in 1/3 stop increments. Turning the command dial counterclockwise decreases the exposure in 1/3 stop increments. Note that the exposure compensation is added or subtracted to any exposure compensation which has been set manually via the exposure compensation button. If the exposure compensation is currently set to +2/3 stops and the easy +/- compensation is set to -2/3 stops, the net exposure compensation will be 0.



Memo Holder Settings

The Memo Holder Settings form allows you to turn on the camera's built-in ability to record information about each frame which is shot as well as set the level of detail the camera records.

The shooting data popup list has four options for determining what level of detail the camera stores with each frame. By default, the camera stores no data.

Minimum stores only the camera's aperture and shutter speed. Medium adds lens focal length, exposure metering system, exposure mode, and flash mode.

Maximum adds any exposure compensation and flash compensation.



The screenshot shows a dialog box titled "Memo Holder Settings". It contains the following options: "Shooting Data:" with a dropdown menu set to "Don't Store"; "When Full:" with a dropdown menu set to "Stop Recording"; a checked checkbox for "Imprint Data on Frame #0"; and a text field for "Next Roll Number (0-9999):" with the value "57" entered. At the bottom, there are "Cancel" and "Save" buttons.

In the event that the camera's shooting data memory fills while in the middle of a roll, the camera offers two options for how the camera will act. By default, the camera simply stops recording data for any subsequent shots. The other option, "Download Data" will force you to either download the information before continuing or turn the camera off and then back on before it will allow any further pictures to be taken.

If your camera is equipped with a MF-26 databack, the "Imprint Data on Frame #0" turns on the databack's function of printing the current roll number on frame #0 each time a new roll is loaded into the camera. Turning on the "Imprint Data" function does nothing if a MF-26 databack is not attached to the camera.

Lastly, you can set the roll number for the next roll. This number is displayed in N90s Buddy's main window listing all the rolls for which you've downloaded data from the camera.

If "Film in Camera" or "Data Stored In Camera" appear near the bottom of the form, the level of shooting data may not be changed until all the data in the camera has been downloaded and there is no film loaded in the camera.

Download Shooting Data

The "Download Shooting Data" downloads all completed rolls to N90s Buddy. Any roll which is in progress is not downloaded until the roll is complete and rewound.

Troubleshooting

Problem
XXXX

Solution

Make sure camera is turned on and all cables are connected to the PalmPilot and camera. (The PalmPilot serial cable has the PalmPilot connector on one end and a 25-pin connector on the other.)

HarTalk cable does not work

The HarTalk cable uses DTR as a voltage reference. The HarTalk cable cannot be used without adding an external battery. Contact Cocoon Creations for assistance.

Wrong Camera Error

N90s Buddy currently only works with the N90s/F90x camera and does not work with the N90s/F90 camera.

Reporting Bugs

If you encounter any problems with N90s Buddy, please report them. Make sure you include at least the following items when reporting a problem or bug:

- Type of 3Com PalmPilot: Pilot 1000, Pilot 5000, PalmPilot Personal or PalmPilot Professional
- PalmPilot OS version (shown in the upper-right corner of the Memory application)
- Is the problem reproducible? Does it happen all the time or only sporadically?
- What steps are required to reproduce the problem?
- What were you doing when the problem occurred?
- Any other relevant information you can think of.

