

Introduction



Asahi Super Multi Coating Takumar 28mm, f/3.5 is a very nice, small lens med quite a few years on its back. It was produced in three variations. The first two looking much alike and the third with multi coated lenses.

This review looks at the third edition that was discontinued in 1971.

*Modlysblande = Lens hood
Fokusring = Focus ring
Blændering = Aperture ring
Adaptorring = Adaptor*



The lens has a filtrediameter at 49mm, it weighs in at at little more than 200 gr. The lens will pop between 4.9 cm and 5.2 cm out from your camera . Adding the lens hood this will be up to 7.5 cm. And look at the lens hood; it looks soo good.

The near limit is about 40 cm. The build quality is, as usually with Takumar, in top. Metal and glas. The focus ring and the aperture ring moves like in oil. Smooth like silk. This little lens provide a great feeling of quality.

It is a M42 lens. That means you need an adaptor ring before you can mount the lens on your DSRL. It is possible to get adaptor rings with focus assistance. That will make your camera give you the normal "focus alarm", when focus is obtained. That is a great help, if you haven't got superman skills in the art of focus. And it is a very useful help since your cameras viewfinder darkens when you step down the aperture.



Turning the focus ring takes only about 90 degrees. That is not very much. But it has to be seen in conjunction with the focal length. At just 28 mm you very fast reach the infinity point and there for the need for etc. 180 degreeed turning is not crucial. The Depth Of Field (DOF) is always relatively large when using a wide lens. Focusing between 40 cm and 90 cm is within the first 45 degrees and focus from 2 meters to infinity is just about 10-15 degrees of the turn of the ring. It isn't difficult to find focus anyhow.

The focus ring is in metal, could be slippery. But it's not. The design gives very good grip. A pure pleasure.

When turning the focus ring, the end of the lens doesn't turn. That's good, when using POL-filter.

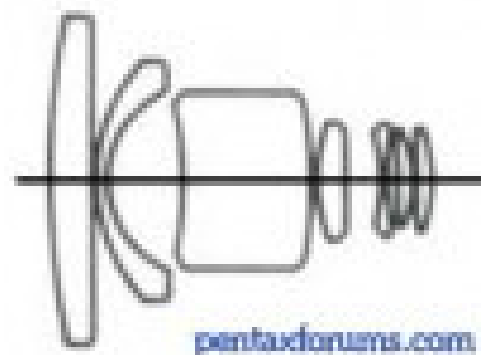
Aperture is from f/3.5 to f/16. The ring is thin, but still quite easy to operate. There are some good and effective grooves to help you get a good grip and they work. The movement of the ring is nice. The lens has a switch between manual and automatic aperture. I use that switch to help me find focus; because the viewfinder does go dark when you step down aperture – and sometimes it gets too dark. So I focus with the manual/auto switch in Auto (Aperture will stay open) and when focus is found, I turn to the switch to manual and the blades will spring into the right position. The lens has five blades.

Data

1971

Weight	Diam x Length	Filter Size	Min. Focus	Max. Magnification
218 g		49 mm	40 cm	
Diagonal FOV (APS-C)	Horizontal FOV (APS-C)	Min. Aperture	Max. Aperture	
55 degrees	46 degrees	f/16	f/3.5	
Diagonal FOV (24x36)	Horizontal FOV (24x36)	Diaphragm	Optical Construction	
75 degrees	65 degrees	Automatic	7 elements, 7 groups	

The lens has 7 lenses in 7 groups. It is crowded in there.....



Price

It is an old lens but the build quality of the lens and general tender care for the lens has given me a very fine sample. It is next to new – VGC – in Very Good Condition.

The blades are dry and clean.

At the moment (November 2011) the lens is priced at Ebay between £50 and £80 (buy-now-prices) for lens in good condition. The lens hood is priced between £20 and £30.

The pictures

I have used Olympus E-520 for all pictures. Unless otherwise is stated, the pictures are straight out of the box – no additional editing than converting to JPG and resize.

This page: Aperture is f/5.6.
Distance is about 50 cm. A gentle levels adjustment to lower the shadows.

In My Opinion (IMO): Nice colors, very good sharpness, nice soft bokeh.



This page: The garden of Frederiksberg Castle. Aperture is f/5.6



IMO: Very nice capture of the light, fine handling of the contrast. Sharpness is okay.

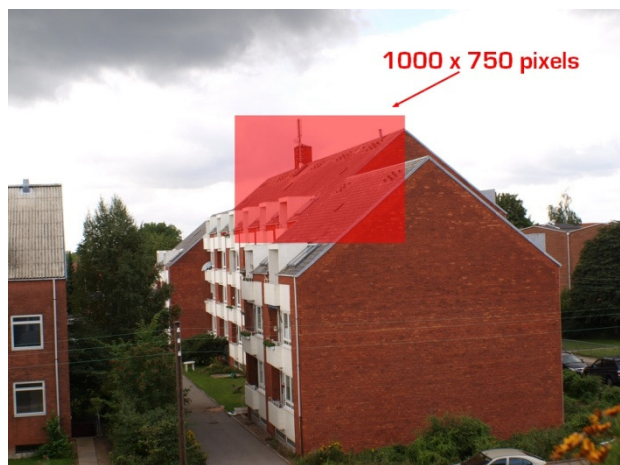


At the distance of 100 meters it is obvious that the lens will have some problems with sharpness in 100% crops. The focal length is great for landscape pictures, but landscape pictures are not supposed to be seen at 100% crop.

At right you see a picture of one of the buildings in the area I live. The red square illustrates how much of the total picture a 1000 x 750 pixel crop is.

Below you see the crop. The distance is about 100 meters.

IMO: Even the sharpness isn't brilliant at this distance; the lens does deliver a good number of details.



The sky is burning out; but that has nothing to do with the lens. It's just a matter of the camera and the settings used.

Pictures from inner cities like Copenhagen will often give difficult light due to the narrow streets the shadows and the often strong reflections from the windows.

IMO: But the lens does, I think, give very good results. No problems with Chromatic aberrance despite the strong light on edges and note the fine details in both the sky/clouds and the facade.



And the fine handling of background light is also visible at the right.

The distance to the top of the tree is about 40-50 meters.

And the crop below confirms:

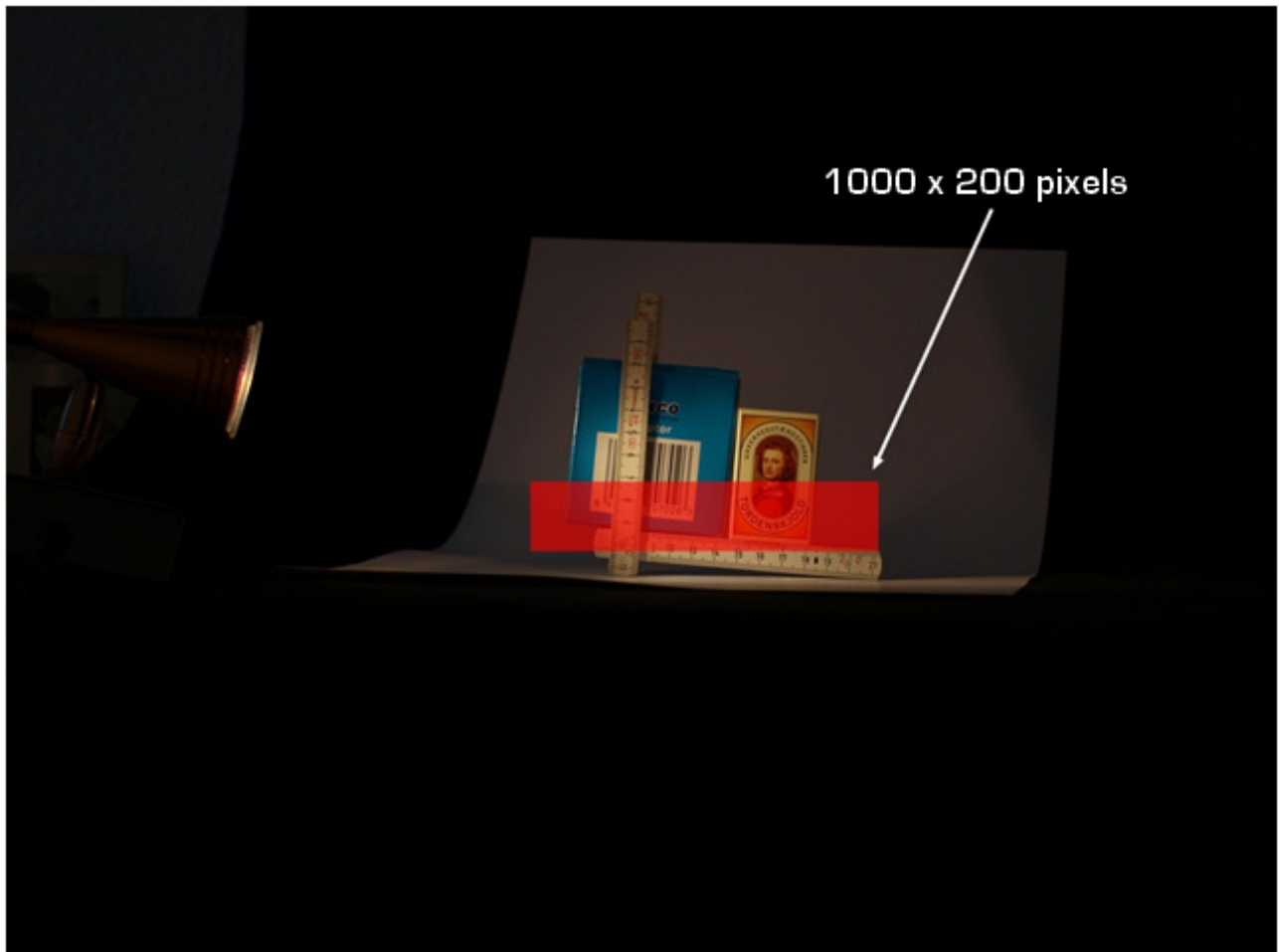
IMO: No Chromatic aberration and a very nice sharpness.



Sharpness

I have, as I always do, conducted a small test to see the sharpness of the lens. Remember that this test is only enthusiastic, not scientific.

The setup is simple. The camera is locked on the tripod. Continuous light and the pictures are taken in Aperture priority.



The small red bar illustrates how much a 1000 x 200 pixels crop is.

One picture has then been taken for each aperture scalling on the lens:

3.5
5.6
8
11
16

And the crop has been taken and added into one picture:



IMO: a result with no surprises. The best sharpness is at f/8 and most lens and wide open, at f/3.5, the lens is not razor sharp. But nevertheless still sharp. At f/11 the lens loses some sharpness and at f/16 the lens seems somehow soft.

Conclusion

I had some great expectations about this lens from the very beginning. The Takumar brand and the reviews/comments I had read about the lens was very positive. And on top of that I do have a small collection of Takumar's and they all deliver very good pictures.

And I am not disappointed at all. The lens does deliver the pictures and the quality of the lens construction and build is great.

It is a nice lens to operate. The feeling is spot on and the pictures are very sharp with nice colors, smooth bokeh and no CA problems.

In my book this is a quality lens. And quality lenses don't come cheap – and they don't have to.

In my scale from 1 to 5 (five being the best) and considering the price the Asahi Takumar 28 mm does bring a nice result home:

Mark out of five: 3.5