

Introduction



Asahi Super Takumar 135mm, f/3.5 is a very nice lens with a filter diameter at 49 mm. The lens weighs in at 343 gr. and it will stick out about 12 cm from your camera. Near limit is 1.5 meter. The feel of the lens is very very good. It has been built with quality and duration in mind. The focus ring runs so smoothly as if it was running in oil. The aperture ring has good clear clicks. It is really a pleasure.

It is with M42 screw. 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's a contrast sensor letting the camera give the characteristic beep sound when focus is found. 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 camera's viewfinder darkens when you step down the aperture.

The focus ring is in metal and it has nice deep ribs that insure a good grip. The focus ring turns almost a full circle – 360 degrees and that is a lot of turning, when you shift from close focus to distance focus. The first 180 degrees covers the distances between 1.5 meters and 3 meters. It is very easy to find focus with such a big turn for every cm. The rest of the turns isn't hard either. The front element does not rotate when focussing.

The lens is, so to speak, fast as most of the old 135's. That is f/3.5. The aperture ring is thin and easily operated thanks to the ribs. It moves smoothly and with clear clicks when reaching a full stop.

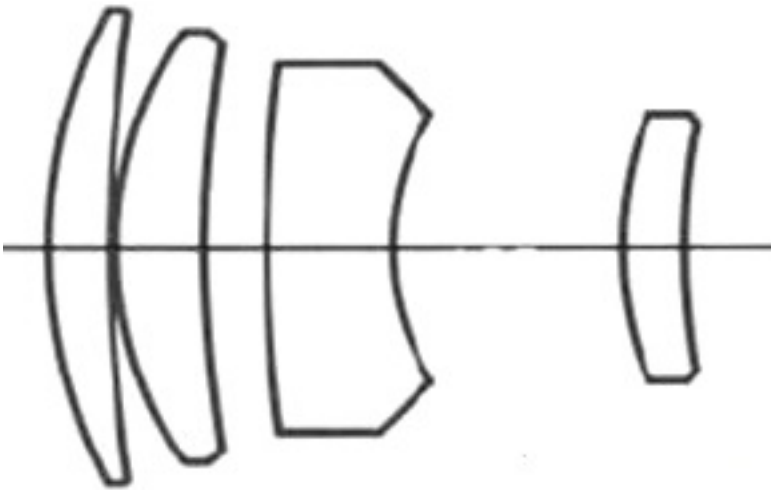
The lens has six blades.

The 135 mm f/3.5 is the baby brother of the famous Asahi Takumar 135 mm f/2.5.

Data

Weight	343g
Diam x Length	59.5mm x 87.5mm
Filter Size	49 mm
Min. Focus	150 cm
Max. Magnification	0.11x
Min. Aperture	f/22
Max. Aperture	f/3.5
Optical Construction	4 elements in 4 groups

The elements are placed like this:



Price

The eBay buy-now prices seem to be around £ 60-70 (lens from Europe), a little higher from US. But there are at present also auctions that end soon with a present pricetag at about £20-30. I guess that a price about the £ 50 mark is a realistic guess.

And note that many of the lenses offered are in very good shape. It surely seems like owners of Takumar lenses have been taking good care of their lenses.

With a relatively low price, you might be expecting somewhat low image quality. But then you would be wrong:

The images

All images are shot using Olympus E-520.

F/3.5:





The images has been shot wide open – at f/3.5.

In my opinion: The images teels a story of a lens with very fine sharpness; very nice clours and a nice, smooth bokeh running into the background. The images does appear a little on the warm side; but in my experience that is the case with many old lenses; and it is easily corrected.

F/5,6:



Above: The distance to the tower is about 8-900 meters.

Right: The distance to closest balcony is about 70 meters.

In my opinion: Both images hold the light very well. The contrast is well kept and the sharpness looks very fine. The colours does not appear to warm here.





Above: The distance is close to the near limit of 1.5 meters.

Right: The distance is about 8-10 meters.

In my opinion: Again the Takumar 135 mm f/3.5 provides nice results. Good in sharpness, fine in colours and the bokeh that smoothly takes the background away from our eyes.



Conclusion

I must admit that I like to use old lenses. They often give a certain feeling that modern lenses doesn't. I do know that lens manufacturers have gained a lot of knowledge since the 60's and the 70's. I do know that the modern lenses most likely will beat the c... out of the old lenses comparing data; but still: It does give me a good feeling putting a good, old lens on the camera and taking a walk.

But no matter how good the feeling is, if the lens doesn't deliver good results; i'd rather stay home.

Asahi Takumar 135 mm f/3.5 is a good lens. The build quality is fantastic. To operate the lens is like listening to ones favourite music. The lens is sharp – even wide open. The colours are fine, a little to the warm side, but still fine. The bokeh is very smooth.

In short: This lens will put a smile on your lips.

And when you then add that the lens is available at a very reasonable cost; it really doesn't get much better, does it?

On a scale from 0 to 5, 0 being the worst and 5 being the best, this lens makes a solid: 3.5