

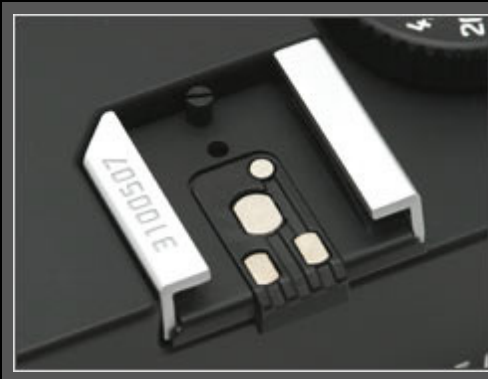


Connector



The M8 has just one connector, a USB 2.0 mini-B socket on the left rear side of the camera. This can be used for file transfer from the SD card as well as remote control shooting using the supplied Leica Digital Capture software.

Flash hot shoe



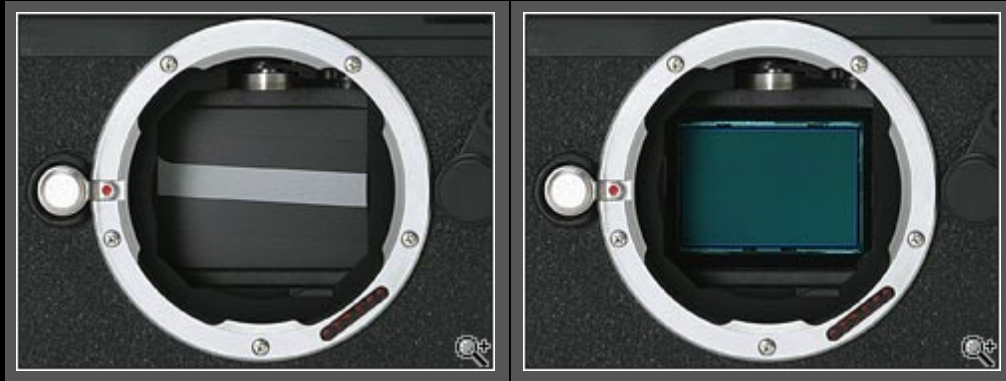
On the top of the camera is the 'flash shoe', this allows the mounting and use of compatible flash units, including the Leica SF 24D flash unit (best suited because of its compact size) and other flash units which comply to the SCA (System Camera Adaption system) * which allows guide number control. You can also fit simple third party flash units which are simply fired using the center X-contact.

* The M8 user manual notes that: *Flash units which satisfy the technical requirements for System Camera Adaption (SCA) System 3006, are fitted with the SCA-3502/3501, adaptor and which allow guide number control. When using adaptor SCA-3502 (from version 4) the white balance can be set automatically for correct color reproduction.*

Lens mount / 6-bit coding sensor

The M8 has a Leica M-bayonet lens mount with the new 6-bit lens identification sensor. Lenses are attached to the body by matching the red dot on the lens to the lens release button, then just twist clockwise approximately thirty degrees and the locking pin will click satisfyingly into place (such a simple but remarkably well executed mechanism). As mentioned earlier because the M8 doesn't have a mirror box the distance between the lens mount and sensor / film is much shorter, around 29 mm compared to around 45 mm on a typical SLR. This is very obvious when you first remove the body cap and does make it considerably easier to examine (and if needs be) clean the sensor. At the bottom

right edge you can see the 6-bit lens coding 'sensor strip' which is used to identify the lens used (see below).

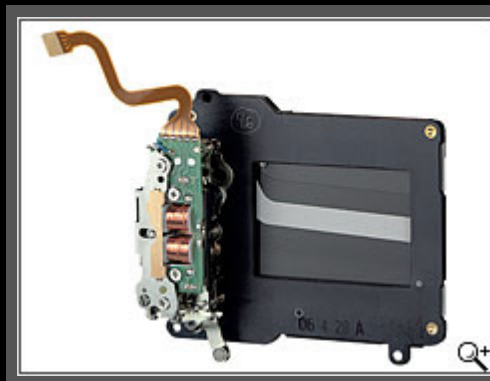


6-bit lens coding



The Leica 6-bit lens coding system was **announced in June 2006**, it enables the M8 to identify the lens in use. With no electrical connection between the lens and body the dots system was the only solution. All new M series lenses are coded and existing lenses can be updated for a small charge. The identification of the lens is used by the camera to apply additional vignetting correction (if required), you can choose to disable identification if you wish.

Shutter / release sound



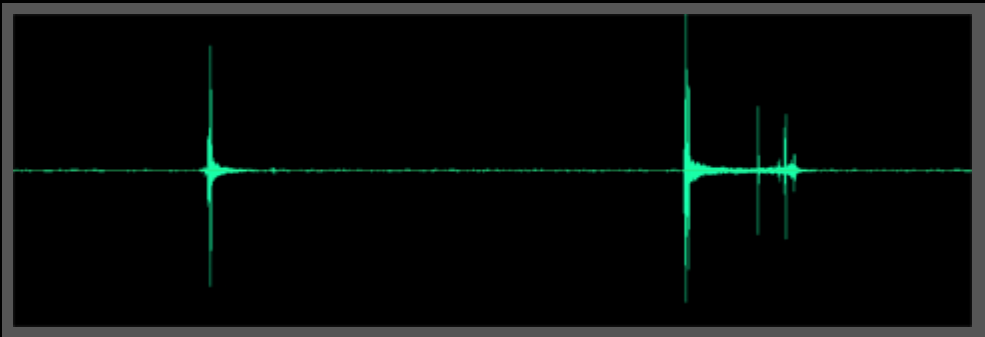
The M8 is the first M series camera to use a metal blade shutter rather than the traditional cloth shutter which has been the mainstay of the M series. The primary reasons for the switch are: limited space in the camera body (the metal blade shutter occupies far less space) and no requirement for manual cocking of the shutter. The shutter mechanism itself appears to be very similar to that of the R9 apart from the painted white blade.

The advantages of the metal blade shutter are:

- Faster maximum shutter speed: 1/8000 sec (versus 1/1000 sec on the M7)
- Faster flash sync speed: 1/250 sec (versus 1/50 sec on the M7)
- No need to manually arm the shutter mechanism
- Likely to be more robust and last longer than a cloth shutter (contentious)

On the negative side the initial opening 'click' is louder than a cloth shutter, more noticeable however is the re-arming 'whir' which occurs immediately follows the exposure, with a cloth shutter you have to re-arm the shutter yourself by turning the winder lever. Below you can see the waveform of a sound recording we made of first the M7 shutter release and then the M8 (both cameras at 1/125 sec, both

tripod mounted and the same distance from the microphone). You can hear this for yourself by downloading the MP3 file below the waveform.



Leica M7 (cloth shutter) then Leica M8 (metal blade shutter) - MP3, 68 KB

Supplied In the Box

The Leica M8 box contains:

- Leica M8 camera (silver or black)
- Carrying strap
- Body cover (M bayonet)
- Lithium-ion rechargeable battery
- Battery charger (inc. three mains plug adapters and car socket adapter)
- USB cable
- User manual
- Warranty card
- Software DVD
 - Capture ONE LE
 - Leica Digital Capture
 - User manuals in all languages (PDF)

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