



Lenses for sport

PUBLISHED - 01 AUG 2018

With nail-biting tension in the World Cup, at Wimbledon and The Open, never mind school sports days in the sun instead of the usual rain, 2018 has been a huge summer for sport so far, and it's not over yet – the Women's Hockey World Championships is about to bully off, the Test series against India coincides with the start of the Premier League football season and the Women's World Cup, and there's the Challenge Cup rugby final to come, too. Choose the best NIKKOR lenses for capturing award-winning action whether it's in national stadiums or your local sports pitches with our essential guide.



© GLYN KIRK/AFP

What do you want?

Make choosing the best lenses for your needs easier by asking yourself these questions.

- Do you want to shoot mostly outdoor or indoor sports, or both? Inside, you might struggle with light levels, so a “fast” lens with a wide maximum aperture such as f/1.4 or f/2.8 will make the most of the available light (although the low-light shooting capabilities of Nikon DSLRs mean you can safely shoot at higher ISO levels without fear of noise). Outside, light levels will generally be higher, so maximum aperture is less of an issue.
- Are you after a lens or lenses that you can use for other subjects as well as sports, such as landscapes? If yes, zooms might be a better option than telephoto primes, as they’ll give you both the reach for sport and the flexibility for many other subjects.
- Would you like to experiment with the lenses you’ve already got? You might enjoy using a teleconverter – it’s a relatively inexpensive, small and lightweight way of boosting the focal length of a compatible lens by [1.4x](#), [1.7x](#) or [2x](#), depending on the version you buy.

Now read on for our expert suggestions...

Get shorty

You probably think of telephotos when you think about sports photography but let’s start by considering some shorter options.

If you’re more interested in shooting feature-style than action photography, where the emphasis is often on the face, then the [50mm f/1.8G](#) is a serious contender – super-fast, lightweight and with gorgeous bokeh for defocused backgrounds to emphasise the subject, it’s great value if you’re on a budget, and superb in low light conditions such as indoor events. In fact, a classic 50mm lens is an invaluable addition to any photographer’s kitbag, ideal for a whole range of situations where you want something nifty and unobtrusive – street and travel photography, for example. Remember that, due to the crop factor on a DX sensor, the 50mm will give you an angle of view on a DX camera of around 85mm.

Talking of which, the [85mm f/1.8G](#) is a fast medium-telephoto offering pin-sharp images with beautiful bokeh thanks to its shallow depth of field – ideal for sports portraiture and low-light photography in general, including indoor events. The compact, lightweight design makes it

perfect for use on a DX camera (where it gives you an angle of view similar to 128mm), and at around a quarter of the price of its pro-spec, [f/1.4G](#) big (and heavier) brother, it's excellent value.