



This manual is for reference and historical purposes, all rights reserved.

This page is copyright© by M. Butkus, NJ.

This page may not be sold or distributed without the expressed permission of the producer

I have no connection with any camera company

On-line camera manual library

This is the full text and images from the manual. This may take 3 full minutes for the PDF file to download.

If you find this manual useful, how about a donation of \$3 to: M. Butkus, 29 Lake Ave., High Bridge, NJ 08829-1701 and send your e-mail address so I can thank you. Most other places would charge you \$7.50 for a electronic copy or \$18.00 for a hard to read Xerox copy.

This will allow me to continue to buy new manuals and pay their shipping costs.

It'll make you feel better, won't it?

**If you use Pay Pal or wish to use your credit card,
click on the secure site on my main page.**

Agfa

OPTIMA III S

GUARANTEE

The lens fitted to your camera is a product of the Agfa Camera Werk and has been computed and manufactured in conformity with the most up-to-date scientific methods.

This lens reaches a standard of performance never previously attained in lenses of equal speed having the same number of elements. Its chief advantages lie in its great depth of field, extremely high resolving power, excellent definition and outstanding reproduction of detail.

The total of these characteristics makes this the ideal lens for miniature photography with black and white or colour film.

In addition, every lens is thoroughly tested before leaving our factory by the most up-to-date methods and is guaranteed by us for its quality and performance.

*AGFA AKTIENGESELLSCHAFT
Camera-Werk Muenchen*



EXPLANATIONS
OF ADJACENT
ILLUSTRATION

Operation, pages 2-6

- ② Rapid transport lever
- ④ Magic release lever
- ⑨ Setting mark
for focusing symbols
- ⑩ Setting ring for symbols

Technical section, pages 7-16

- ① Catch for camera back
- ③ DIN/ASA scale
- ⑤ Light prism
for red and green signal
- ⑥ Accessory shoe
- ⑦ Rewind knob
- ⑧ Diaphragm ring
- ⑪ Flash contact

CONTENTS

	PAGE
Rangefinder	2
Focusing symbols	3
Holding the camera, viewfinder	4
Green signal—exposing	5
Rapid transport lever	6
<hr/>	
Film types	7
Loading the camera	8/9
Film counter	10
Setting the film speed	11
Without the automatic mechanism	12
Flash technique	13
Against the light and close-up exposure readings	14
Filters and accessories	15
Rewinding the film	16

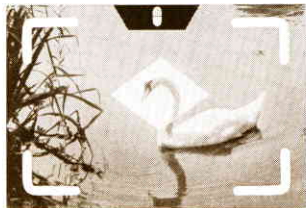
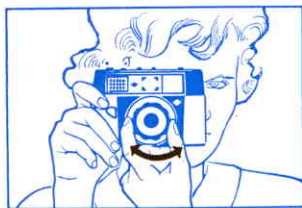
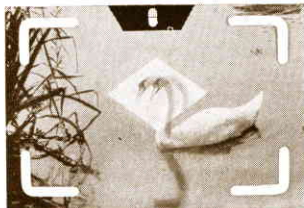
You are now the proud owner of a technically perfect camera—the fully automatic Agfa Optima III S which does not require any complicated manual operations and so leaves you free to concentrate on the subject. What a source of boundless joy that is!

From your photographic dealer you will have learned how simple the Agfa Optima III S is to handle. Shutter speeds and apertures which once had to be worked out, measured or set are now at your beck and call.

The fully automatic mechanism is something of a miracle, your invisible slave to calculate, think and act for you—just a touch of the “magic release lever” suffices. The symbol settings cover three focusing ranges; exact focusing can be quickly done with the built-in coupled rangefinder.

You will probably wish to get familiarized with this masterpiece of precision. On pages 2 to 6 you will find brief operating instructions; technical advice and useful photographic hints are given on pages 7 to 16.

Exact focusing . . .



The built-in coupled rangefinder is very easy to operate and allows exact focusing of your subject in split-seconds.

With your Agfa Optima III S you can photograph at all distances between $3\frac{1}{4}$ ft. (1 m.) and infinity.

Upper illustration:

In the centre of the viewfinder image you will see a diamond-shaped portion which is yellow-coloured. At first, this centre image will be separated into two horizontally displaced outlines.

Middle illustration:

If you move the focusing ring with the thumb or index finger you will find that the outlines of the double centre image coincide. With the camera held horizontally the image outlines move sideways; when held upright they move vertically.

Lower illustration:

As soon as the two outlines converge measurement is completed and the camera exactly focused.

There are three focusing symbols on the lens mount of your camera. According to the distance from the subject you set one of the three following symbols against the white mark:



Close-ups

Subject distance
5 ft. 11 in.



Groups

12 ft. 5½ in.



Distant views

infinity
(landscape)

Intermediate settings are also possible, if required.

For your guidance exact distances are also indicated on the lower part of the focusing ring. The white mark above the word "Compur" indicates the actual distance setting.



Hold the camera fast . . .

When photographing it is important to hold the camera steady. You should therefore take your Optima in both hands and brace your arms against your body. Place the index finger of your right hand on the magic release lever. When you look through the viewfinder you will see a luminous frame which surrounds the subject and shows you the exact picture area.



As the luminous frame moves automatically when the focusing ring is turned the exact picture area will be shown even for close-ups (3¼ ft.).

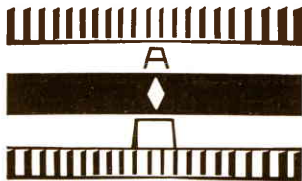


To take upright photos, operate the release lever with your thumb or index finger, as illustrated.

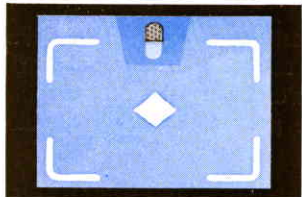
To ensure correctly exposed photographs it is important to set the correct film speed on the camera (see page 11).



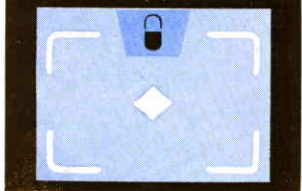
Green signal . . . expose



Note!
The automatic mechanism is connected when the A and the white mark are in line.



Green signal:
"All clear" for
your photograph



Red signal:
Stop—
do not photograph

The lighting is under constant control as soon as you actuate the rapid transport lever. Sight your subject. With the signal at green, press down the magic release lever to the pressure point. Then **keep the camera in this position** and release.

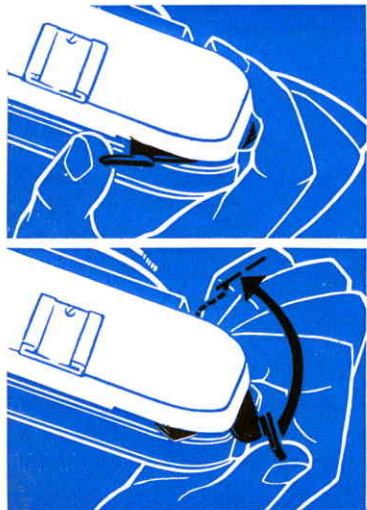
The red signal means there is not enough light; time exposures or flash will then help you (see pages 12/13).

Note!

If release lever is blocked operate the rapid transport lever first.

If you change the direction of your camera before making your exposure, remove your finger from the magic lever and start afresh. This can be done as often as you wish.

Instant readiness . . .

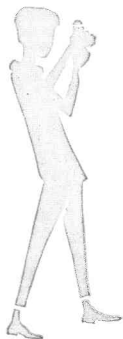


... can be obtained with the rapid transport lever of your Optima. Therefore, advance your film immediately after each exposure. Just swing the lever forward to the stop to move the film one frame. The film counter at the lower rear edge of the camera shows you how many exposures you still have left.

If the rapid transport lever will not move, the camera is already set for the next exposure. The shutter release and film transport are fitted with a lock to prevent blank or double exposures.

If you release the rapid transport lever before completing the full forward stroke it will return to its starting position. In this event you should swing the lever forward again as far as it will go.

TECHNICAL SECTION



when you have mastered the hints mentioned and are thoroughly familiar with your camera too.

First of all, something about films and how to choose them:

First use Agfa Isopan F, 17° DIN (40 ASA). It is a fine-grain black-and-white film of good contour sharpness and consistent quality.

For sport photography the rapid Agfa Isopan ISS film, 21° DIN (100 ASA), is just right.

With Agfacolor films you can explore the world of colour. These films have been firm favourites for more than twenty years, because of their natural reproduction of both pastel and brilliant colours. In addition, their high speed has made the living snapshot in colour a practical reality.

For sharp, brilliant colour transparencies:

Agfacolor Reversal Film CT 18.

For wonderful album colour prints:

Agfacolor Negative Film CN 17 or CN 14.

Loading the film . . .

The film can be loaded in daylight, but always in the shade—making use of body shadow.

First open the camera back by sliding catch in direction of arrow.

Push locking button of rewind knob in direction of arrow and

draw out rewind knob **firmly** with right hand as far as possible.

Now set the film type indicator by turning the milled edge protruding at the bottom of the rewind knob until the desired setting appears in the window:

Black-and-white-checks

= Black and white film

CN = Colour negative film

CT = Colour reversal film,

DAY daylight type

CK = Colour reversal film, artificial light type (incandescent lamps of 3400° Kelvin)

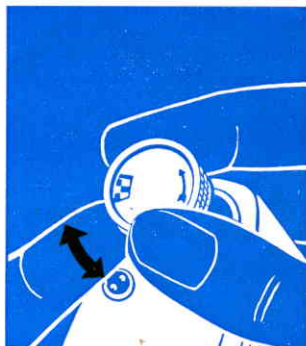
CF = Colour reversal film, artificial flashlight type (3800° Kelvin)



A



B



C

Insert new film cassette with hole towards rewind knob.

Push back rewind knob, if necessary turning it slightly.

Turn take-up spool by its milled disk until the broad slit and film perforation lug are uppermost.

Draw out the film from the cassette towards the take-up spool.

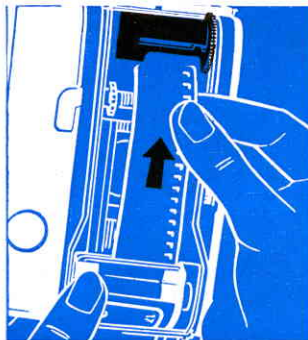
Insert the end of the film in the slit, holding the take-up spool

firmly, so that the lug engages in the second film perforation.

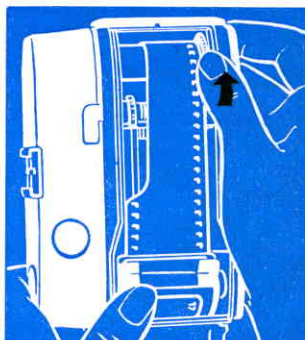
Now turn the take-up spool on slightly in the direction of the arrow, as shown in figure F, until just under half an inch of the full film width projects from the cassette. Close the camera.



D



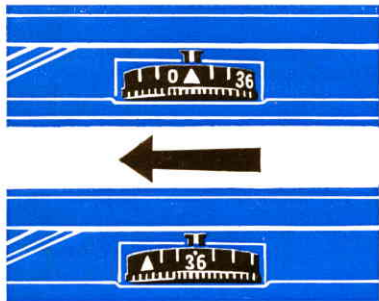
E



F

Film transport

for the first exposure



After loading the film, the camera should be closed and the film counter at the lower edge of the camera back set. Turn the disk of the film counter until the tip of the green triangle just before the number 36 or 20 (depending on the length of the film) is in line with the fixed mark. Then operate the rapid transport lever as far as it will go and press down the magic lever until release takes place. Repeat this process until the mark is in line with the number 36 (or 20). Your camera is then ready for the first exposure. The film counter indicates the number of exposures still left on the film.

Every time the film is moved on the rewind knob rotates in the opposite direction to that shown by the arrow, a sure sign that the film is properly loaded and transported.

Double exposures impossible

An ingenious double exposure prevention mechanism ensures that you do not take two photographs on one negative. In addition the film cannot be transported until an exposure has been made.

Fully automatic operation

Important:

Remember to set the speed of the film loaded on the camera **to be sure of correctly exposed photographs.**

To do this, push in the small arresting knob and turn the milled disk with the aid of a coin until the required DIN or ASA speed is opposite the setting mark.



for all films

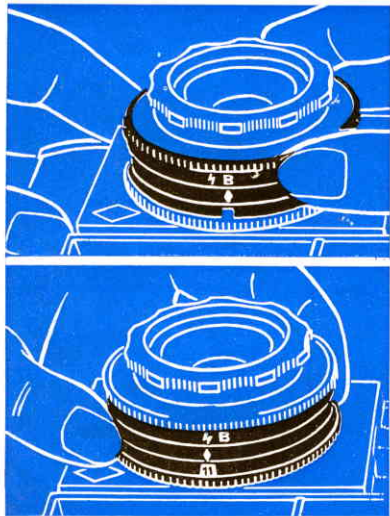
from 11–25° DIN (10–250 ASA)

When you press the magic release lever, the exposure reading is automatically and invisibly fixed for you. During the exposure it then automatically arranges a shutter speed and aperture combination which always ensures the correct exposure.

ASA Scale: The ASA values indicated by dots on the film speed scale of the camera represent the following figures:

10	.	.	.	25	.	.	50	.	.	100	.	.	200	.
	12	16	20		32	40		64	80		125	160		250

Without the automatic mechanism



You probably recall what was said about the **red** stop signal in the viewfinder. When it appears you cannot photograph with the Optima using the automatic mechanism, but if it is disconnected you can still obtain good results. To do this set the automatic mechanism ring at the time- (B) or flash symbol (see illustrations on this page).

Time exposures

Turn the milled ring on the lens mount until "B" is in line with the mark, as shown in the top illustration. When on this setting the shutter stays open as long as the release lever is depressed. The use of a tripod and a cable release is advisable in such cases. The latter is screwed into the thread below the release lever from the side. By turning the rear milled ring the apertures become visible in the small window.

No flashlight problems

For flash work turn the automatic mechanism ring until the flash symbol is opposite the mark.



A constant shutter speed of $\frac{1}{30}$ sec. is used for flash work. The adjacent table shows the apertures needed for a number of flash bulbs at present on the market. The aperture is set by turning the rear ring. The plug of the flash cable is connected to the flash contact (11, main illustration).

Electronic flashguns can also be used, in which case the aperture is calculated from the guide number of the flashgun.

E. g. guide number of electronic flashgun 96 divided by a distance of 12 feet = aperture $f/8$.

APERTURE TABLE FOR FLASH PHOTOGRAPHY

With lightning symbol set, shutter speed will automatically be $\frac{1}{30}$ sec.

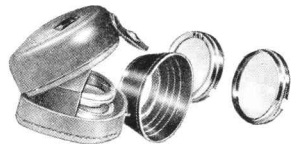
Symbol	Distance feet	Clear bulbs Black and white film Negative colour film (CN 17) 17° DIN = 40 ASA	Blue bulbs Daylight colour reversal film (CT 18) 18° DIN = 50 ASA
		XM 1 - PF 1	XM 1 B - PF 1/97
	5	f. 22	f. 16
	7	f. 16	f. 11
	9½	f. 11	f. 8
	15	f. 8	f. 5.6

Against the light

Where clear detail is required in photographs taken against the light or in deep shadows, the automatic mechanism of the camera can still be used with the setting on the DIN/ASA scale reduced. It is advisable to set a film speed of about 3° DIN or its ASA equivalent less than that marked on the film package. If, for example, the film in the camera has a speed of 17° DIN = 40 ASA, the setting should be reduced to 14° DIN = 20 ASA.

When a very contrasty subject has to be photographed and it is wished to obtain the correct exposure for an object which is small in comparison with its surroundings, it is advisable to take a **close-up measurement**. If this is not done, a person in a light dress in front of a dark wood (to give an example) could easily produce an incorrect reading.

In such cases approach with the camera to a short distance from the subject and press down the release lever gently to the first pressure point. Hold the lever in this position and return to your original position to take the photograph.



A leather case designed to take a lens hood and two filters is available.

Filters for your Optima III S for black and white photography

	Reduce DIN scale setting by	
light yellow	1	} degrees DIN
medium yellow	2	
yellow-green	2	
UV filter (ultra-violet)		no change

for special photographs with colour reversal film

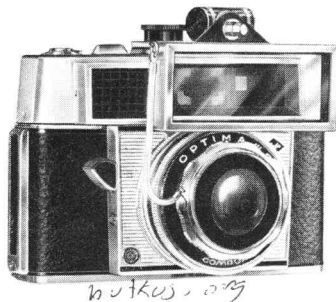
Agfa Color Filter	
R 1.5	no change

Filters

There is a variety of filters for **black-and-white film** available for use with the Agfa Optima III S in screw mounts of 35.5 mm. diam. As soon as a filter is used on the camera you will have to reduce the setting on the film speed scale accordingly.

A filter having a factor of 2 will require a reduction in the speed setting of 3° DIN or its ASA equivalent. If you have a film of 17° DIN = 40 ASA this means that you will have to reduce the figure to 14° DIN = 20 ASA. A factor of 1.5 would require a reduction of 1-2 degrees DIN.

When removing the filter from the camera do not forget to reset the original DIN/ASA figure for the film in question.

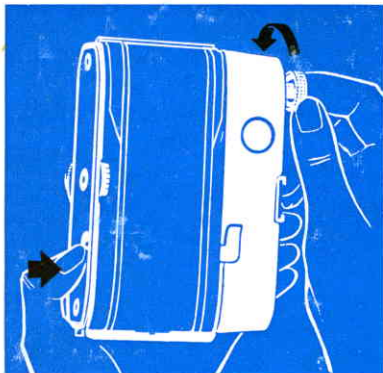


CLOSE-UP ATTACHMENT FOR OPTIMA III S

For the Optima III S, a practical close-up attachment is available, the Agfa Proximeter. It is supplied in two ranges: Proximeter I for a range of 40-20 inches and Proximeter II for a range of 20-14 inches. Both Proximeters may be used together to give a range of focus of 14-10 inches. The Proximeter enables close-up subjects to be seen free from parallax in the viewfinder and focused accurately with the rangefinder.

Your photographic dealer will be glad to demonstrate this optical attachment to you.

Rewinding the film



The film is now finished...

After 36 or 20 exposures, according to the length of the film, the rapid transport lever will not move. The film is now finished and must be rewound into its cassette.

First release the lock of the rewind knob (see illustration B, page 8) to allow this to spring out, and draw it out only a fraction to its first stop.

Then press in the locking button in the base of the camera and turn the rewind knob in the direction shown by the arrow. Rewinding is complete when the rewind knob turns freely after releasing the locking button. You can now open the back of the camera by pushing

the catch in the direction shown by the arrow (see fig. A, page 8). Pull out the rewind knob firmly as far as it will go and remove the cassette. Put the cassette in its light-tight packing and mark it as exposed.