

# PENTAX®

## P3



Thank you most sincerely for choosing one of our Pentax 35mm SLR cameras.

Before starting to operate this camera, please be sure to read this operating manual very carefully to familiarize yourself with every detail of the features and functions it has to offer. We hope you will enjoy fine photography with this camera for many years to come.



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### BASIC OPERATION

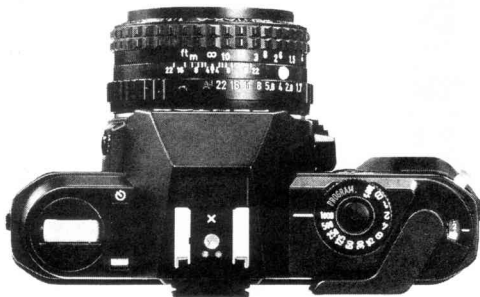
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When this camera is used with any SMC Pentax-A lens, it offers three exposure modes: Programmed AE, Metered Manual and Programmed Auto Flash. When the lens aperture is set to "A" position, the Programmed AE mode can be used. When the lens aperture is set to any f-stop other than the "A" setting, the Metered Manual mode can be used.

- When the conventional K- or Kf-mount lens is used, the camera operates in the Metered Manual mode.



## Programmed AE Mode

The camera automatically selects the most suitable combination of shutter speed and aperture to obtain correct exposure, simultaneously changing the combination according to the brightness of the subject. This mode is suitable for those who do not want to be bothered by setting exposure controls or those wishing to take "action" photos.

## Metered Manual Mode

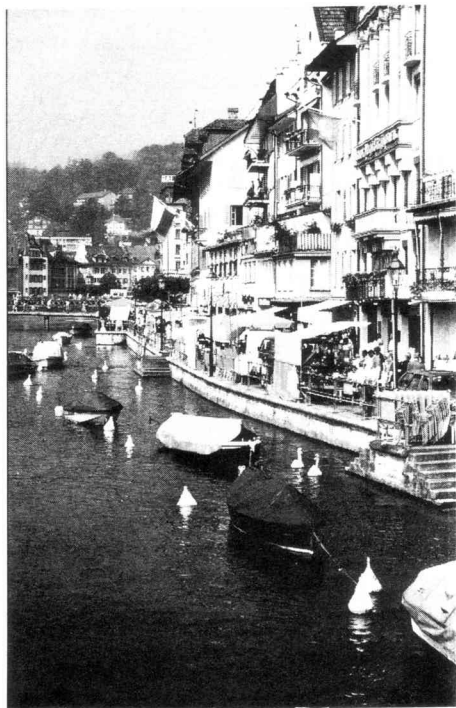
The combination of shutter speed and aperture is completely up to you. Guided by the meter indication in the viewfinder, you can adjust both controls to obtain proper exposure. If necessary, deliberate over- or underexposure can be obtained.

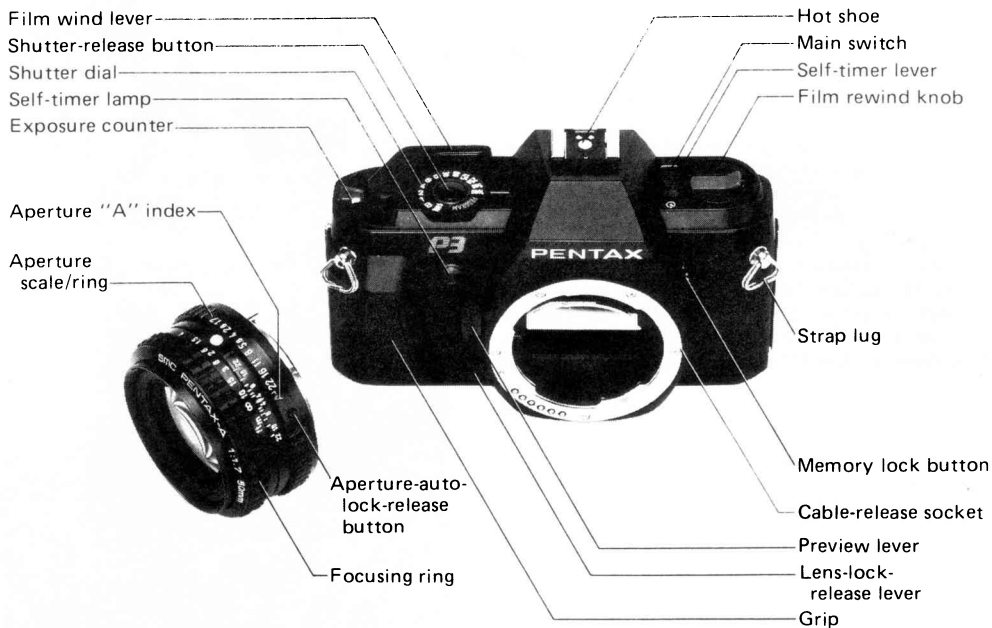
## Programmed Auto Flash Mode

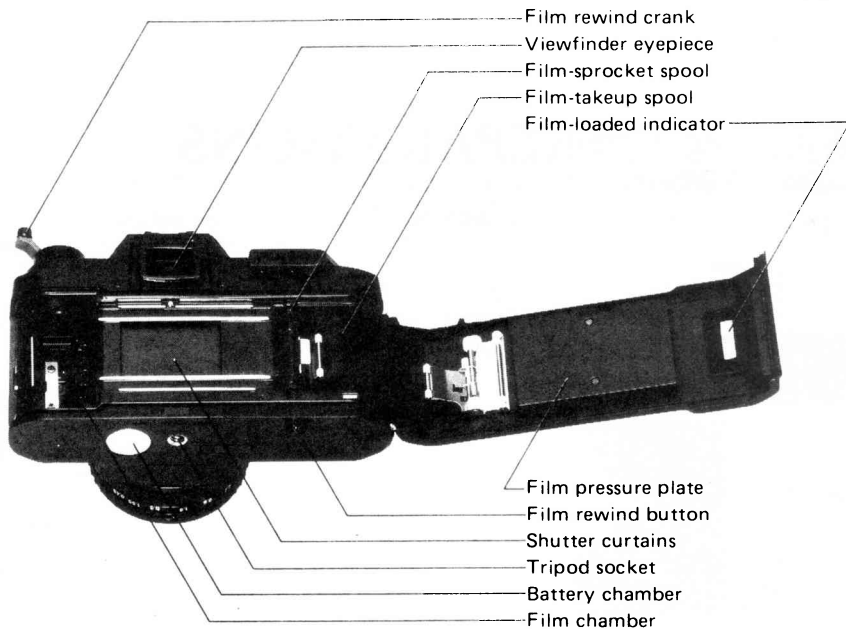
When you use a Pentax dedicated auto flash on this camera in its Programmed AE mode, the camera automatically selects the proper aperture and shutter speed to control flash output for proper flash pictures.

What you should know first about this camera

- The camera does not operate unless the batteries are properly inserted. Be sure to check how they are inserted before operating it. Also check if the main meter switch is set to ON or OFF.
- Most flashes made by others can be used on this camera, but Pentax dedicated flashes will offer more convenient functions. Even if you use a flash with TTL auto flash provision, this camera does not provide TTL auto flash operation.
- When you use the accessories such as Extension Tubes, Microscope Adapter, etc. that are mounted between the camera body and lens, this camera operates in the Metered Manual mode. The Programmed AE mode cannot be used.

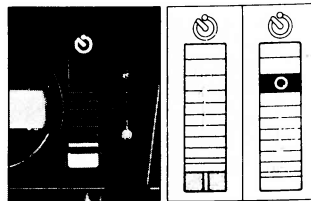
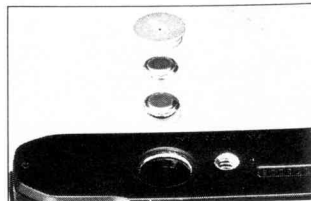
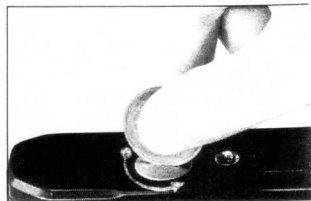




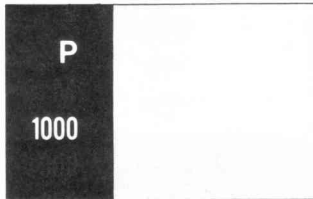
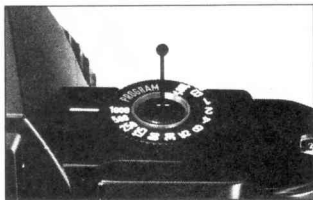


This camera is powered by two 1.5-volt alkaline or silver-oxide mini-batteries.

- Open the battery chamber cover by turning it counter-clockwise with a coin.
- Insert the two batteries into the chamber with their (+) sides facing downward, and replace the cover.
- As illustrated, turn the meter on by sliding the main switch in the direction of the arrow.







- Press the shutter release button half-way and make sure that a shutter speed appears on the left side of the viewfinder.

#### **Timer switch**

The built-in timer switch automatically turns the meter off in about ten seconds after you release your finger off the shutter button.

#### **Battery check**

If no shutter speed is displayed in the viewfinder even with a slight pressure on the shutter button, the batteries have no power or may be improperly inserted.

#### **When batteries weaken**

When the batteries are becoming weak, the shutter speed displayed in the viewfinder starts to blink slowly at the speed of once per second. If so, replace the batteries immediately. If the batteries are completely exhausted, the shutter button does not release the shutter.

## ATTACHING AND DETACHING LENS

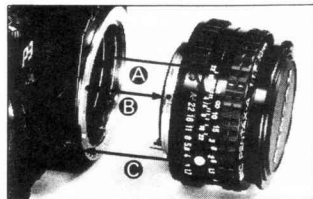
To mount or interchange Pentax K, KA and Kf mount lenses, follow the steps below.

- Remove the body mount cap and the rear lens cap. If the finder cap is still on the eyepiece, remove it.
- Align the red dot on the camera body with the red dot on the lens (See A, B). Seat the lens in the body mount and turn it clockwise until the lens locks with a click. When mounting the lens in dim light, method (C) is recommended. This method allows lens mounting by touch.

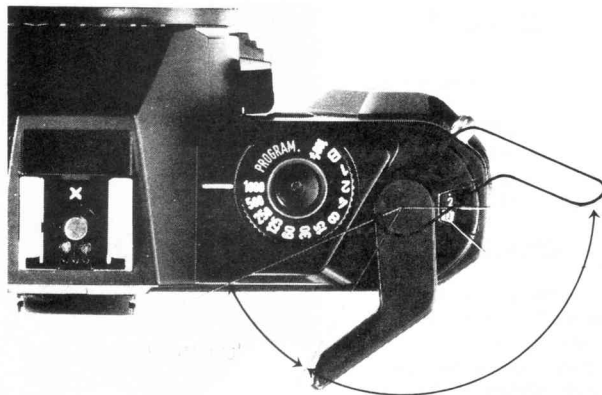
Align the raised node on lens barrel with the lens release by touch. Then turn and lock as above.

- To remove the lens cap, press in on the notches at both sides.
- To remove the lens, press the lens release lever toward the camera body while turning the lens counter-clockwise.
- After removing a lens from the camera body, replace the front and rear lens caps to protect the lens from dust and stains.

**Note:** Don't damage or stain the electrical contact points on the mount face. When they become stained, wipe them with a clean, dry cloth



## FILM WIND LEVER



### Exposure counter

The scale is indexed as follows:

S • 0 • 2 • 4 • ..... • 20 • .....  
24 • ... • 36.

Interlocked with the film wind mechanism, this counter indicates the number of exposed frames.

### Setting the wind lever for rapid shooting

The film wind lever can be set at the stand-off position for faster film advance. Even if you remove your thumb from the lever, it remains at the stand-off angle, ready for the next quick shot. After completing a series of pictures, the lever should be pushed in to the original position.

### Film advance stroke

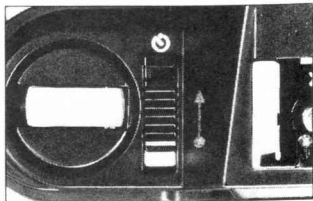
The film wind lever should be thrown as far as it goes.

The wind lever may stop in the middle of a stroke when the film comes to its end. Do not force the lever and rewind the film, leaving the lever as it is.

## MAIN SWITCH, SHUTTER RELEASE BUTTON, SHUTTER SPEED DIAL

- **Main switch**

To release the shutter, be sure to turn the main switch to ON. When the main switch is off, the shutter cannot be released and the meter remains off.



- **Shutter release button**

As you turn the main switch on and press the shutter release button half-way, the meter will turn on, and a further pressure on the shutter button will release the shutter.



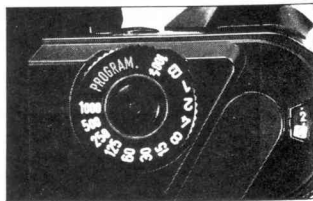
- **Shutter speed dial**

When shooting in the Metered Manual mode, turn the shutter speed dial until the desired shutter speed aligns with the index (red line).

**1000** — **1** = 1/1000 - 1 sec.

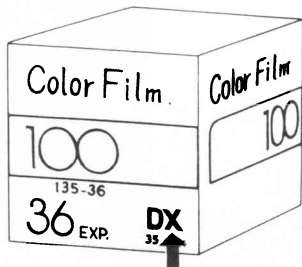
**B** = Bulb (long-time exposure)

**100** **⚡** = 1/100 sec. (flash-sync speed)

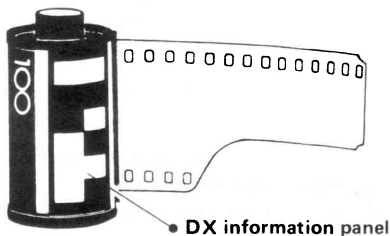


## FILM

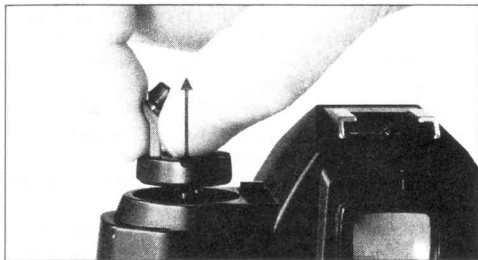
### DX FILM



This camera automatically sets the ISO film speed of DX-coded film when it is loaded into the film chamber. Therefore, you are recommended to use only DX-coded film in this camera. (If non-DX film is loaded the camera will automatically set the film speed to 100, whatever film speed it may have; in other words, the only non-DX film usable for this camera is one with ISO 100.)

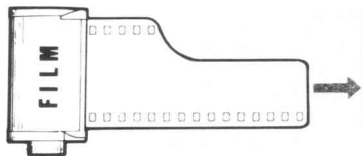
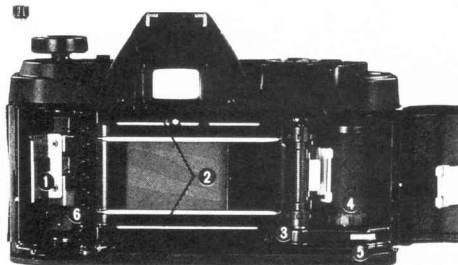


The film speeds which can be automatically set by this camera range from ISO 25 to 1600, so be sure to use the DX-coded film having a film speed within this range.



Always load or unload film in the camera in a shady spot, or shield it from direct sunlight with your body.

- As illustrated, unfold the rewind crank by pushing it with your finger-nail.
- Pull the rewind knob upwards until the back cover snaps open.
- Slide the film cartridge into the film chamber with the flat side up. Lock the cartridge in place by pushing the rewind knob down, rotating it slightly making sure that it grips the spool.



❶ Film chamber

❷ Guide rails

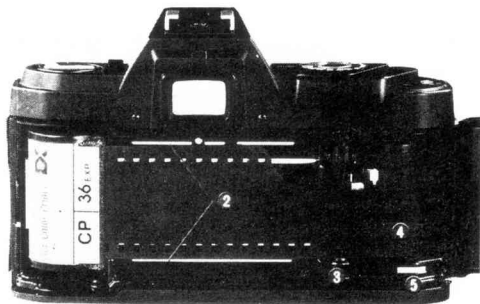
❸ Sprocket teeth

❹ Spool teeth

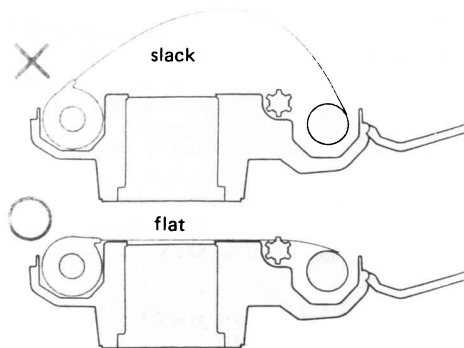
❺ Film leader end mark

❻ DX-information pins

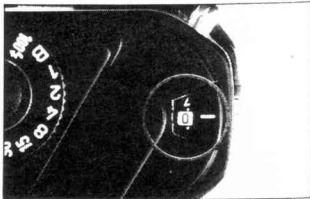
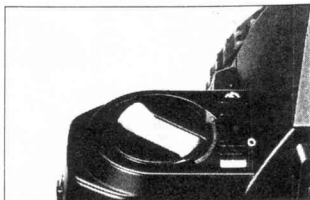
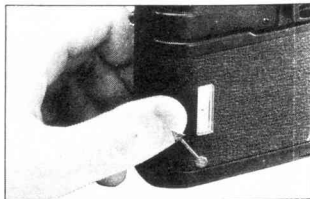
**Keep the DX-information pins free from scratches, dirt, dust, etc.**



- As illustrated, pull the film leader out so that its end aligns with the ❶ film leader end mark (red bar); in other words, bring the film leader end within the length of the bar.
- Make sure that the perforations on the bottom side of the film have engaged the ❸ sprocket teeth as well as the ❹ spool teeth.
- Also make sure that the film is properly placed between the two ❷ guide rails.
- Take up any slack left in the film so that the film is flat as shown, by rewinding it slightly into the cartridge.
- When a film with a higher ISO number is loaded, do not leave the camera out of the case for a long time.

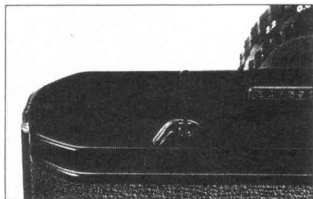


- Close the back cover, making sure that it has snapped firmly in place.
- Cock the film wind lever while checking to see if the film rewind knob turns in the direction of the arrow.
- Repeat making blank exposures until "0" appears in the exposure counter. The next frame is ready for the first shot.
- The film-loaded indicator on the back cover will tell you if the film is loaded or not.



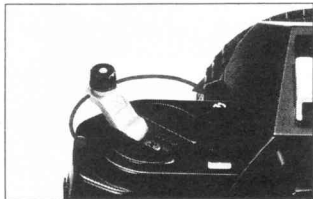


## UNLOADING FILM

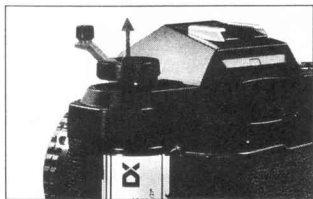


When you reach the end of the roll, the film wind lever will stop moving abruptly — maybe at some point in the middle of a stroke. Do not force the lever beyond the number of exposures shown on the cartridge.

- Press the film rewind button recessed in the base of the camera.



- Unfold the crank and turn it clockwise all the way until you feel it loosen when the film leader is released from the take-up spool.

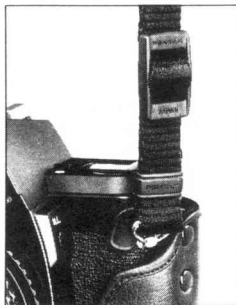
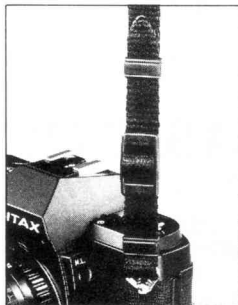


- When the rewinding is over, lift the rewind knob sharply to open the back cover, and take the cartridge out.

If you accidentally opened the back cover without rewinding the film, close it immediately, since the film except the last several frames might be saved.

- To attach the strap to the camera, first pass the end of the strap through the strap lug on the camera, fold it back, then pass it through the strap ring, and through the strap clasp and the last ring. The strap end may be passed through the inside or outside of the clasp.
- Remove the front cover from the back cover. Put the camera in the back cover and put both case hooks around the camera's strap eyelets. The camera is now held securely in place.

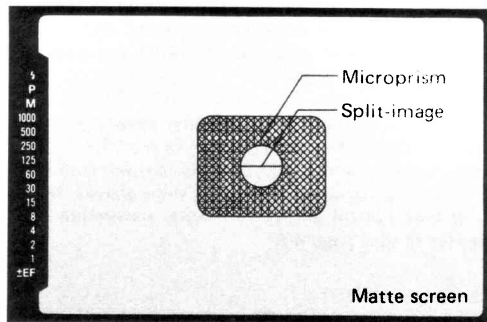
- The soft case for this camera is available in two sizes: P-S for the camera with a standard 50mm lens, and P-L for the camera with a zoom lens such as 28 - 80mm.



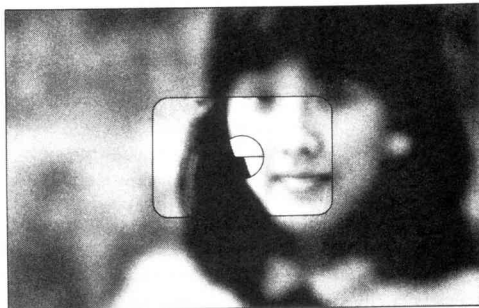
## VIEWFINDER DISPLAYS

Various exposure data described at right are displayed by LED on the left side of the viewfinder.

LED = Light-Emitting Diode



- P** ..... Programmed AE mode
  - M** ..... Metered Manual mode
  - 1000 ~ 1** ..... Shutter speeds from 1/1000 to 1 sec.
  - 1/2** ..... Flash-ready indication
  - Blinking "1000"....** Overexposure indication (blinks four times per second)
  - Blinking "1".....** Underexposure indication (blinks four times per second)
- (The above two indications also appear when the exposure combination is out of the shutter/aperture-coupling range or the metering range.)
- Camera-shake (stow-shutter-speed) warning**  
**Warning** ..... 30 ~ 1 appears in orange



You can focus in three ways, with the split-image, microprism, and/or matte field. To focus using the split-image, turn the focusing ring until the two images in the split-image circle at the center of the focusing screen are perfectly aligned. When using the microprism collar, focus until the glitter disappears from inside the collar. With the matte field, focus until the image on the matte field appears sharp and crisp.

**Note:** If the maximum aperture of the attached lens is smaller than  $f/5.6$  (for example,  $f/8$  as in the case of a long telephoto), it is easier to focus on the matte field since the split-image and microprism collar areas become much too dark for satisfactory focusing.

#### **Diopter adjustment for viewfinder eyepiece**

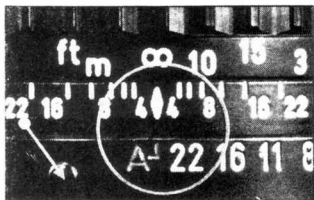
People who wear eyeglasses due to myopia, hypermetropia or presbyopia, sometimes find it difficult to focus while wearing their glasses. In this case, use the accessory diopter correction lenses M (See page 42).

## HOLDING CAMERA

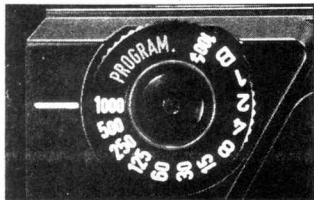
Proper holding of the camera is essential to minimize camera shake which causes blurred pictures. Practice holding and operating your camera before inserting your first film cartridge. Generally there are three basic ways to hold the camera. In any case, hold the camera tightly to your face with your hands. The grips on this camera will help you keep a steady hold on your camera. Release the shutter gently while slowly breathing out. Strong pressure on the shutter

release button may cause blurred photographs. Take a secure, well-balanced posture without straining yourself. The portion marked O in the illustration should be drawn to your body. It is a good idea to stabilize your body and the camera using a tree, building wall, table, etc. For long exposures or while using telephoto lenses, it is recommended to use a tripod in order to reduce camera shake to a minimum.

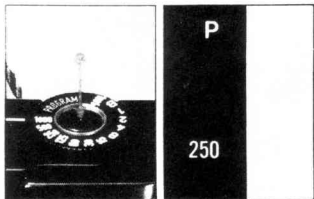




- The camera is switched to the Programmed AE mode by just setting the lens aperture to the "A" position while keeping the Auto-lock Release Button on the SMC Pentax-A lens.

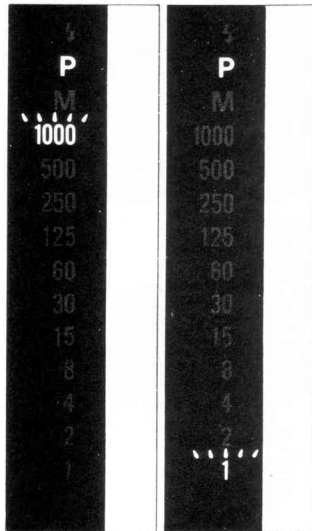


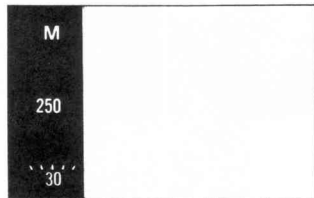
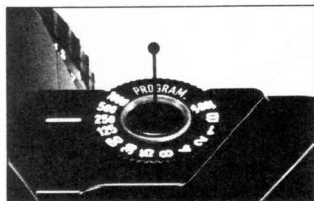
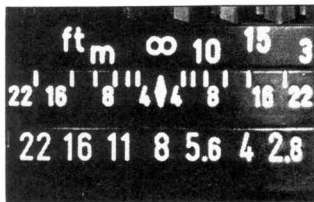
- You can leave the shutter dial set at any position.



- Turn the main switch on, then press the shutter release button half-way, and you will see "P" and a shutter speed are displayed in the viewfinder. As you further press the shutter button, the shutter will be released.

- When the subject is too bright or dark, “1000” or “1” blinks as a warning. When the subject is too dark and “30” or smaller figures appear in the viewfinder, it warns that there is a danger of camera shake. In such a case, use a tripod or a flash. (For details, refer to page 27.)





- When the lens aperture is off the "A" setting and set to any f-stop, the camera operates in the Metered Manual mode. If the aperture is set at the "A" position, release it from the position by turning the aperture ring while depressing the auto-lock-release button.
- Slightly press the shutter release button with the main switch on, and you will see "M" and a shutter speed are displayed in the viewfinder. When a shutter speed and another blinking shutter speed appear simultaneously as shown at left, it indicates incorrect exposure. Change the shutter speed or the aperture until the blinking shutter speed disappears, so that correct exposure can be obtained.



### When setting shutter speed first

Set the shutter dial to the desired shutter speed. Rotate the aperture ring until the shutter-speed display changes from a blinking speed to a just glowing speed, namely, only one shutter speed is seen, so that correct exposure can be obtained. If the display does not switch from a blinking speed to a glowing speed even by turning the aperture ring, reset the shutter speed by turning the shutter dial.

