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.
Introduction

CONGRATULATIONS — on becoming the owner of a precision Omega View camera. Your Omega View has been carefully designed and crafted for rugged use on location or in the studio. Treat it with the same good care you would give every precision photographic instrument, and it will provide you with many years of reliable service.

If you have had prior experience in large format photography, you will appreciate the camera's ready adaptability to your creative demands. Some of the operating procedures outlined in this manual will already be familiar to you.

Should your previous photographic activity be limited to the use of smaller format, non-adjustable cameras, your Omega View will open up an exciting new world to you, a world in which you can explore new dimensions in photography that can lead to realization of the finest photographic craftsmanship, control and quality.

Components and Controls

Major Components

- Rear Standard Assembly
- Bellows
- Front Standard Assembly
- Monorail Assembly with Elevated Rib
- Fast Focus Lock
- Tripod Mounting Block with 3/8" and 1/4x20 Sockets

Revolving Back
Standard on 45D
Special Features of Your Omega View

Large Square Lensboard
The Omega View lensboard will accept almost any size lens and shutter combination. Because the lensboard is square, it can be placed on the camera in any of four positions. This means that the shutter speed and aperture controls can be easily used regardless of camera position.

Revolving Back
The revolving back rotates a full 360° so that the format can easily be changed from horizontal to vertical. The rotating feature is also helpful for aligning the image or changing the image position on the ground glass. The bail release simplifies insertion of film holders and opens the back wide enough to accept the Polaroid™ Land Film Holder Model 545.

Spirit Levels
The horizontal and vertical spirit levels on the camera back frame permit convenient positioning of the camera in the neutral position. The levels can also be used to bring the camera back to the vertical position when correcting for vertical distortion.

The Large Monorail
The rib on the monorail feature a calibrated scale for convenient determination of bellows extension. The keyway in the tripod mounting block allows the camera to rotate 10° on the monorail to compensate for unevenness of the tripod and to help bring the horizon to the level point.

Graflok™ Accessories
The groundglass back can be removed to accommodate Graflok type accessories. Simply push down the focusing frame releases and slide the ground glass back off the camera.

Film Holders
The Omega View is designed to accommodate all standard 4"x5" sheet film holders and the Polearoid 4x5 Land Film Holder Model 545 without removing the groundglass focusing frame. 6x7cm and 6x9cm roll film formats are available with the optional 45D Roll Film Adapters. The Polaroid Land Pack Film Holder Model 405 can be used by removing the ground glass frame and securing the holder with the slide locks.

Bellows
The rugged Omega View bellows is made of a special extremely flexible material which permits camera movements even with shorter focal length lenses. The bellows is durable, and requires no special care.

Recessed Wide Angle Lensboard
For architectural, scenic and other short focal length photography, the Omega View recessed wide angle lensboard should be used to permit easy focusing and camera movements with wide angle lenses.

Ground Glass Viewing
1. The large lined ground glass area lets you accurately evaluate and compose the image exactly as it will appear on film.
2. Camera adjustments can be accurately used only with a ground glass screen.
3. When making multiple exposures on one piece of film, you can preplan your composition, and draw the layout for each exposure on the ground glass. Use a grease pencil, crayon or other pencil that will wipe off easily.
4. For an even brighter image on the ground glass, the accessory Fresnel Focusing Screen Kit may be installed.

*Polaroid is a registered trade mark of the Polaroid Corporation.
Unpacking

Your Omega View has been carefully packaged. It can be quickly set up or disassembled, for ease in storing or carrying in relatively small spaces. This makes it possible to transport the camera in a luggage style case; or, when properly protected, in a backpack for carrying in the field without the bulk of a fully assembled camera.

Carefully remove all the Omega View components from the camera and monorail containers, and place them on a clean level surface. You will find the following items:

1. Front and rear standards assembled with bellows, ground glass and lensboard.
2. Monorail with removable end caps.
3. Tripod mounting block.

NOTE: Save the packaging materials and cartons in the event you wish to ship the camera at a later date.

Mounting the Lens

If a lens was not mounted on the lensboard when your Omega View was purchased, take the lens and lensboard to a qualified camera repair technician for proper mounting. The Consumer Service Division of Berkey Marketing Companies will also mount your lens for a nominal charge.

To place the lensboard on the camera:

1. Push the top lensboard slide lock up, and the lower lensboard slide lock down.

   NOTE: Always hold the lens with one hand while engaging or unfastening the slide locks to prevent it from falling.

2. Place the lensboard on the camera and return the slide locks to their locked positions.
3. The lens diaphragm and shutter speed controls should be easily accessible.

Assembly

1. Remove one of the end caps from the monorail. Depress the locking button, and slide the end cap off the rail.
2. Loosen the fast focus locking knobs on the front and rear standards.
   Remove the cardboard shipping tube from the front and rear standards.
3. Loosen the lock knob on the tripod mounting block.
4. Gently slide the monorail through the front standard. Make certain that the ribbed guide on the monorail fits the keyway on the front standard.
5. Slide the tripod mounting block onto the monorail, centering it with the lock knob on the left side.
6. Slide the rear standard onto the monorail and replace the monorail end cap.
7. Tighten the fast focus locking knobs on the front and rear standards. Tighten the lock knob on the tripod mounting block.

NOTE: Tighten the lock knobs and levers firmly, but do not overtighten. Excessive force is not required to hold the camera in position.

Tripod Mounting

Place your Omega View on a sturdy tripod, and secure firmly. There are two tripod mounting sockets: one for standard tripods (1/4 x 20), and one for European threaded tripods.

Bringing the Camera to the Neutral [Zero] Position

The neutral position is the point where the camera is level; the front and rear standards are vertically and horizontally parallel to each other with no front and back rise or lateral shift. The detents for the tilts, swings and lateral shifts will help you bring the camera to neutral easily.

1. Unfasten the front and rear rise and fall locking knobs, and bring the front and rear frames to the lowest position. Relock the knobs.
2. Unfasten the lateral shift and swing locking knobs. Move the front and rear standards to the horizontal position. Lateral shift and swing positions are at zero when the detents are engaged. Lock the knobs.
3. Unfasten the tilt lock knobs, and set the front and rear standards to the vertical zero position. Vertical tilt positions are at zero when the detents are engaged. Lock the tilt knobs.
4. The spirit levels on the rear standard will tell you when the entire camera is level.
The Reference Scales
Packaged with your Omega View is a set of self adhesive reference scales for the front and rear standards. These scales indicate the amount of tilt lateral shift and rise. Before applying the scales, be certain that the camera is in the neutral position. Follow the instructions supplied with the reference scales.

Basic Operating Procedure

1. It is usually best to position the front and rear standards so the tripod mounting block is centered between them. This assures even weight distribution and maximum stability on the tripod. When using short focal length lenses, move the front standard to its forward most position to prevent the possibility of the monorail protruding into the picture.

2. Open the lens and set the diaphragm to its maximum aperture for viewing and focusing.

3. The revolving back on the 45D rotates a full 360°. Simply release the brake lever to position the back in any vertical, horizontal or intermediate position to best fit the composition. Secure the brake lever to lock the back in place.

4. Place a focusing cloth, focusing hood, reflex mirror hood or magnifying hood on the back of the Omega View to facilitate viewing and focusing.

5. Unlock the rear standard fast focusing locking knob, and slide the rear standard forward or backward on the monorail until the subject comes into focus. It may also be necessary to move the front standard forward. Relock the fast focus locking knob when the image appears sharp.

6. For critical focusing, loosen the microfocus locking lever, and turn the micro focusing knob. The rack and pinion mechanism allows for extremely precise focus control.

7. After composing and focusing, close the lens; set the required f number and shutter speed; cock the shutter.

8. Insert a sheet film holder which has been loaded with the film of your choice. To insert the film holder, lift the bail arm and slide the holder into position.

9. Remove the dark slide from the film holder.

10. Expose the film using a cable release to trip the shutter.

11. Replace the dark slide, and remove the film holder from the camera. The film is ready for processing.
Camera Movements

When your Omega View is in the neutral position, it functions in the same manner as an SLR or other "rigid" camera. Taking advantage of the camera's movements is the key to creative freedom through the control of distortion, sharpness and depth of field. The versatility of the Omega View is characterized by the ability to move its major components vertically, horizontally and laterally. These movements are called tilts, swings, lateral shifts, rising back and rising front.

Vertical Distortion

Starting Camera Position

Using camera movements is easy to learn. Just remember these four basic rules:
1. Swinging or tilting the camera back controls distortion and depth of field.
2. Swinging or tilting the camera front controls sharpness and depth of field.
3. Swinging and/or tilting the camera front and back in combination controls distortion, sharpness and depth of field.
4. The lateral shifts, rising front and rising back control image positioning for improved composition.

Problem: Converging vertical lines

Solution: Tilt back to vertical to correct distortion. Tilt front to vertical to correct sharpness. Use the spirit levels to accurately bring the back to vertical.

Corrected Photograph
Horizontal Distortion

Starting Camera Position
Camera Neutral

**Problem:** Converging Horizontal Lines

**Solution:** Swing back to correct distortion. Swing front to correct sharpness

**Corrected Photograph**
Horizontal Image Position

Starting Camera Position
Camera Neutral (Front View)

Problem: Poor composition
Reposition Image

Solution: Lateral Shift
Shift front and/or back laterally for desired correction.

Corrected Photograph
Vertical Image Position

Starting Camera Position
Camera Neutral

Problem: Poor Composition
Reposition Image

Solution: Rising front and back
Raise front and/or back vertically for desired correction.

Corrected Photograph
Depth of Field

Depth of field can be controlled with the lens aperture, but may be increased considerably by using camera movements.

Starting Camera Position

Problem: Insufficient Depth of Field

Solution: Tilt front forward to increase depth of field

Corrected Photograph

NOTE: The camera back can also be used separately or with the front to control depth of field. Swings can be used in the same manner to compensate for insufficient depth of field on the horizontal plane.

These are the most commonly used camera movements and applications. All of these movements can be used separately or in combination to achieve the desired correction. For more technical information, you may want to consult some of the excellent books on large format photography which are available from your camera dealer.
Choosing View Camera Lenses

The term “normal lens” applies to all cameras and formats, and simply means that the lens is neither wide-angle nor telephoto, but has a “normal angle of view.” The usual way of determining the normal focal length for a given format is to measure the diagonal of the negative.

The diagonal of a 4"x5" negative is 162mm (approximately 6½"). So it would seem that a normal lens for your 4"x5" camera would be approximately 165mm in focal length. However, there is one important fact to remember: most 150-165mm lenses (except wide field lenses) do not produce a large enough circle of usable illumination to permit the use of maximum camera movements without vignetting. Further, a lens of that focal length is too short for portraiture and general still life applications because it tends to foreshorten facial features and exaggerate perspective. For these reasons, it is best to use a longer focal length lens for “general purpose” view camera photography.

An excellent general purpose focal length for the Omega View is 210mm, because it will allow complete camera movements and can be used for most portrait, commercial and still life applications. The normal bellows draw of the Omega View will also permit magnifications up to 1:1 making close-up photographs possible with the 210mm focal length.

A basic guide to 4"x5" view camera focal lengths:

- **General Purpose**: 180mm, 210mm, 240mm
- **Portraiture**: 240mm, 254mm, 300mm
- **Product & Still Life**: 210mm, 240mm, 300mm
- **Architectural Interiors, Exteriors & Wide Angle**: 90mm, 75mm, 65mm
- **Short Focal Length**: 150mm, 135mm

Helpful Operating Suggestions

1. Always bring the swings, tilts and lateral shift to the zero positions before composing, focusing and making camera movements.

2. Keep your view camera clean and dust free. Wipe the exterior surfaces with a clean lint free cloth. Occasionally, clean the inside of the camera using a vacuum cleaner with a crevice tool attached to the hose. Remove the lensboard and camera back before vacuuming.

3. Sheet film holders must be cleaned regularly. Vacuum or dust thoroughly before loading.

4. If you are using a focusing cloth instead of a magnifying or focusing hood, the cloth should be made of heavy black material and large enough to be used comfortably (approximately 4"x4"). When working outdoors on hot sunny days, a focusing cloth with black material on one side and white on the other side is ideal. Use the white side on top so it will reflect some of the heat from the sun.

5. Don’t subject your film holders to heat or intense light for long periods of time.

6. Always use a cable release when tripping a view camera shutter. A long flexible cable release works well because it will not transmit the movement of your hand to the camera during long exposures.

7. A sturdy tripod is necessary to avoid camera shake.

8. Wait several seconds after removing the dark slide and cocking the shutter before making the exposure. This will help prevent camera shake which can cause lack of sharpness in your photographs.

9. A small angle finder that can be purchased at any hardware store is an excellent aid for correcting converging vertical lines. After tilting the camera back, use the angle finder to make certain the lensboard is parallel to the back.

10. Close up photography: As you move closer to the subject, the lens-to-film distance increases, and the amount of light falling on the film decreases. When you work at closer than normal lens-to-subject distances there must be exposure compensation for the added bellows extension. The following formula for finding the “effective aperture” is a convenient one for determining the additional exposure required.

   a. Measure the length of the bellows extension from the center of the shutter to the ground glass.

   b. Use a light meter to determine exposure (indicated f/stop and shutter speed).

   c. Effective aperture = \[
   \frac{\text{Bellows Extension \times Indicated F Stop}}{\text{Lens Focal Length}}
   \]

   **Example**: light meter reads f/16 (indicated f/stop) at 1/125th Second.

   Bellows extension is 16"

   Lens focal length = 210mm (approximately 8"

   \[
   \frac{16\" \times \frac{1}{16}}{210mm} = \frac{1}{32} \text{ (effective aperture)}
   \]

   This means that the indicated f/stop has a true value of f/32. In order to achieve proper exposure, we must open the lens 2 f/stops or make the equivalent change in the shutter speed. In this example, we could open the lens to f/8 or increase the shutter speed to 1/30 second.

When Choosing a View Camera Lens Remember:

1. Longer focal length lenses require more bellows extension to focus than shorter focal length lenses. You will need a bellows extension the same as the focal length of the lens to focus at infinity (exception: telephoto formula lenses).

2. The lens should produce a large enough circle of usable illumination to permit camera movements. (Exceptions: extreme wide angle lenses: 65mm, 75mm). If camera movements are not necessary, the circle of usable illumination can be smaller, but should fully cover the negative area.

3. The choice of focal length is largely a matter of personal preference. One photographer may prefer a 210mm lens for a portrait, another photographer may use a 300mm lens for the same kind of photograph.

4. The choice of focal length can be determined by the desired photographic effect. For instance, there is no law that says wide angle lens must be used for architecture only. Excellent still life photographs can be made with short focal length lenses to force perspective and give the illusion of extreme depth.

5. Each lens you own should be mounted on an appropriate lensboard. Normal and long focal length lenses should be mounted on the standard lensboard. Wide angle lenses should be mounted on recessed lensboards to allow convenient focusing and camera movement.
Key Features

- 360° revolving back with bail arm for maximum composing freedom and ease of use.
- Full complement of camera movements: Swings, tilts, lateral shifts, rising front and back.
- Swings, tilts and lateral shifts are detented for easy zeroing.
- Easy to apply reference scales are provided for tilts, rise, lateral shifts and monorail.
- Accepts all standard 4x5 sheet film holders, Polaroid™ Land Film Holder Model 545, film packs and Graflex™ accessories.
- Large monorail for greater rigidity.
- Elevated monorail rib maintains precise alignment of front and rear standards.
- Rigid tripod mounting block with two tripod mounting sockets.
- Fast coarse sliding focus as well as rack and pinion micro focusing for front and rear standards with lock.
- Large square lensboard accepts nearly all lens and shutter combinations.
- Dual spirit level on rear standard.

Specifications

Camera Movements (Front and Rear)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Movement</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tilts (front)</td>
<td>±45° in vertical format position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tilts (rear)</td>
<td>±35° in horizontal format position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swings</td>
<td>±30°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rise</td>
<td>3.5&quot; (90mm)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lateral Shift</td>
<td>1.8&quot; (45mm)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revolving Back</td>
<td>360° revolving back with detents and lock</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dimensions:

- Length Overall: 18.6" (474mm)
- Height Overall: 12.9" (325mm)
- Width Overall: 9.4" (238mm)
- Maximum Extension: 17.3" (440mm)
- Minimum Extension: 3.3" (84mm)
- Minimum Extension with Recessed Lensboard: 1.8" (45mm)
- Monorail Diameter: 1.5" (39mm)
- Weight: 7.7 lbs. (3.5kg)
- Lensboard Size: 6.2"x6.2" (158mmx158mm)

Specifications subject to change without notice.