

WILSONWERKS ARCHIVES

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

This cover page is copyrighted material. This document may not be sold or distributed without the express consent of the publisher.

©2008 wilsonwerks Llc

Vivitar®

253

Owner's Manual
Gebrauchsanleitung
Manuel du propriétaire
Manual del propietario

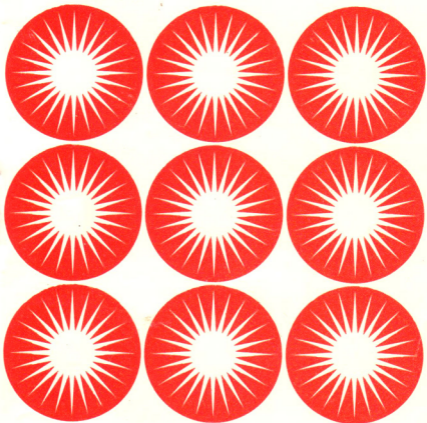


Table of contents

- 2-4 Short course of instructions
- 5-6 Battery operation
- 6-9 AC operation
 - 9 The illuminated calculator dial
 - 10 Forming the capacitor
 - 11 Attaching your flash to the camera
- 12-13 Mode selector
- 13-15 Get ready to shoot . . . automatically
- 15-17 Manual operation
- 17-18 Cameras with built-in automatic flash control
 - 18 After you've finished shooting
- 19-23 Helpful hints
 - Shadows
 - Bounce flash
 - Mirrors
 - Simulating sunlight
 - Open flash
 - Synchronization speed
 - Group shots
 - Flash fill
- 24-26 Specifications, Model 253

Short course of instructions

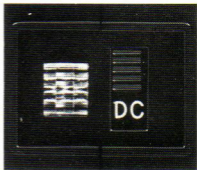
1

Install one 9-volt alkaline battery. (See page 5)



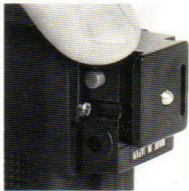
2

Slide the AC/DC Switch to the 'DC' (On) position.



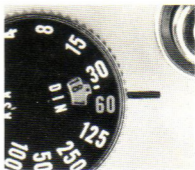
3

Flash unit 5 times to form the capacitor. (See page 10)



4

Set camera to correct shutter speed for electronic flash.



5

Set film speed on Calculator Dial. (See page 13)



6

Mount flash on camera. Cameras with hot shoe are then fully synchronized with flash. For cameras without hot shoe, attach shutter cord to flash unit and 'X' terminal on camera.



7

Set Mode Selector to the color that provides the automatic operating range or depth of field you desire. (See page 12)



8

Set camera lens to the f-stop indicated on the Calculator Dial above the mode color you selected. (See page 14)



9

Focus camera. Make sure the unit is switched on. Take the picture after the Ready Light glows.

Battery operation

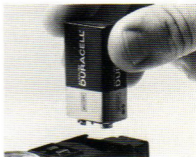
1

Remove the Battery Compartment Cover (4) by sliding it down and away from the body of the flash unit in the direction of the arrow.



2

Install one 9V alkaline battery in the compartment, noting correct polarity as shown on the label inside.



CAUTION: Beware of bargains! Performance to specifications is based on the use of 9V *Alkaline* batteries (Mallory Duracell MN-1604 or equivalent).

3

To replace the cover, push the battery into the flash slightly and align the edges of the cover with the slots in the body of the unit. Slide

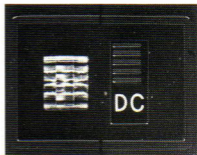


the cover towards the AC/DC Switch until it is firmly seated.

4

To turn the unit on, slide the AC/DC Switch ③ to the 'DC' position.

NOTE: The operating instructions throughout this manual are for *battery operation*. When using the optional AC Adapter be sure to note the changes detailed in the following section on AC operation.



When to change the battery

If, after switching the unit on, the Ready Light fails to glow after 30 seconds, replace the battery.

AC operation

The optional Vivitar SB-1 AC Adapter available from your local photo dealer allows you to fire your 253 flash using household current. AC operation is handy if your battery is low on power, or if you wish to fire many flashes from a single position.

The adapter has two different AC voltage settings:

A. 120-volt AC (U.S.A.-Canada)

The SB-1 has been pre-set to operate where the AC line voltage is 120 volts or less.

To use your flash in the '120v' position:

1

Remove the battery from your flash unit.



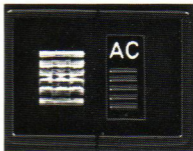
2

Plug the AC Adapter into the Flash ⑦ and any standard 120-volt wall outlet.



3

To turn the unit on, slide the AC/DC Switch ③ on the flash to the 'AC' position. After the Ready Light glows, your flash is ready for use.



B. 220-volt AC (most other countries)

To use your flash where standard line voltage is 220 to 240 volts or less:

1

Remove the battery from your flash unit.

2

Remove the rubber insert from the AC Adapter voltage selector and slide the switch to the '220v' position.



3

Replace the rubber insert, and attach the AC Adapter to both the Flash (7) and any standard 220-volt wall outlet.

4

To turn the unit on, slide the AC/DC Switch ③ on the flash to the 'AC' position. After the Ready Light glows, your flash is ready for use.

CAUTION: The AC Adapter voltage selector must be set correctly to prevent damage to your unit.

A wall outlet AC adapter may be necessary in some countries as AC receptacles vary from country to country.

The illuminated calculator dial

Your Vivitar 253 has an Illuminated Calculator Dial ② which is easily readable in dim light. The dial lights up automatically when the 253 is switched on and goes out when you turn the unit off.

Forming the capacitor

When your flash unit is new or when it has not been used for a long time, the capacitor may lose some of its ability to store electricity. You can 're-form' the capacitor as follows:

1

Set the Mode Selector (9) to the manual 'M' position.

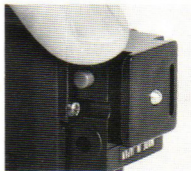


2

Insert the battery and slide the AC/DC Switch to the 'DC' (On) position, or; set the AC/DC Switch to 'AC' and plug the optional SB-1 AC Adapter into both the flash and the wall outlet.

3

After the Ready Light glows, fire the flash using the Open Flash Button (8). Repeat this about 5 times allowing the Ready Light to glow 5 to 10 seconds after each flash.



With either method the capacitor will then be formed and you are ready to begin shooting.

Attaching your flash to the camera

1

Insert the Mounting Foot ⑤ into the accessory shoe on the camera.

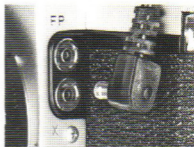


2

If your camera has a hot shoe, it is not necessary to use the Detachable Shutter Cord ⑪ included with your flash unit. Once attached to the camera the flash is fully synchronized with the camera through the contacts in the shoe.

3

If your camera is not equipped with a hot shoe, plug the pointed end of the Detachable Shutter Cord into the Shutter Cord Socket ⑥ on the flash.



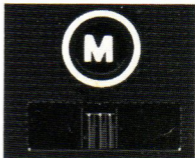
Plug the other end of the cord into the camera flash terminal marked 'X'. (Refer to your camera instructions for specific information regarding your camera's flash synchronization.)

Mode selector

The Mode Selector ⑨ on your 253 can be set to three positions allowing you to select 'manual' operation or one of two automatic modes:

M (Manual)

In this position your flash will operate in the manual mode.
(See page 15)



Automatic modes

When used for automatic flash photography, the 253's light output varies according to the flash-to-subject distance and reflectivity of the subject. Two different automatic modes are provided to give you control over the depth of field in your photographs. The modes are color-coded for easy reference:

RED

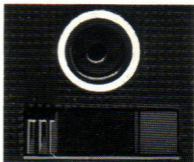
Utilizes larger lens openings for relatively shallow depth of field and a longer operating range. Automatic operating range:
2 to 17½ ft. (0.6 m to 5.3 m).



BLUE

Utilizes relatively small lens openings for greater depth of field. Automatic operating range:

2 to 8½ ft. (0.6 m to 2.6 m).



Get ready to shoot... automatically

1

Set the camera to the correct shutter speed for electronic flash. (Refer to your camera instructions)



2

Set the correct ASA or DIN film speed by turning the Calculator Dial ② until the Film Speed Indicator points to the ASA or DIN of the film



you are using. (See inside back cover) The film speed can be found on the film box, cartridge, or on the data sheet that comes packed with the film.

EXAMPLE: When using ASA 25 film, turn the Calculator Dial until the Film Speed Indicator points to 25 on the ASA Scale.

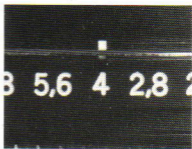
3

Set the Mode Selector (9) to the color that provides the automatic operating range or depth of field you desire. (See page 12)



4

Set your camera lens to the f-stop indicated on the Calculator Dial within the mode color you selected.



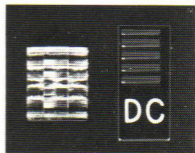
NOTE: The correct automatic f-stops for most popular films are listed in the Specifications, page 24.

EXAMPLE: Using ASA 25 film at a flash-to-subject distance of 7 feet, and desiring maximum depth of

field, set the Mode Selector to the 'BLUE' position, and set your lens to f4.

5

Slide the AC/DC Switch ③ to the 'DC' (On) position. Focus the camera. Take the picture after the Ready Light glows.



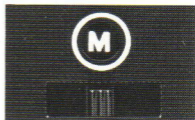
Your flash unit will automatically determine correct exposures within the automatic range for the Auto mode you have selected without further f-stop adjustments.

Manual operation

When you wish to use your Vivitar 253 in the Manual mode (for example, pictures taken beyond the automatic flash range), proceed as follows:

1

Set the Mode Selector ⑨ to the manual 'M' position.



2

Set your camera to the correct shutter speed for electronic flash.



3

Set the ASA (DIN) film speed on the Calculator Dial. (See page 13)



4

Focus the camera and estimate the distance from the flash to the subject. You can usually do this 'by eye' or you can refer to the distance indicated on the camera lens barrel after focusing.



5

Find the flash-to-subject distance on the Calculator Dial 'Feet' or 'Meters' Scale, and set your lens to the f-stop indicated above that distance.



EXAMPLE: If you are 25 feet from your subject and are using ASA 25 film, set your lens f-stop to f1.4.

6

Slide the AC/DC Switch to the 'DC' (On) position. Focus the camera. Take the picture after the Ready Light glows.

Cameras with built-in automatic flash control

Some cameras have a feature which automatically sets the correct lens apertures for flash as you focus. For the camera and your Vivitar 253 to operate properly together, you must:

1

Set the correct flash guide number for the film you are using on the Guide Number Scale of your camera. (Refer to your camera instructions for the location of the Guide Number Control)

2

Make sure the Mode Selector ⑨ is set to the manual 'M' position.

NOTE: The proper flash guide numbers corresponding to both ASA and DIN film speeds are indicated in the Specifications, page 24.

After you've finished shooting

Battery

If you're not going to use your flash unit for several weeks, or if the battery appears weak, remove it.

Let it glow!

Do not flash your 253 before putting it away. Just turn it off. *It's better to leave the Ready Light glowing.* The next time you use it, your flash will 're-form' faster, and its life will be extended.

Helpful hints

Shadows

To avoid harsh shadows in your pictures, position your subjects at least 3 to 4 feet from walls or use 'bounce flash'.

Bounce Flash

You can soften the light, making it less harsh and directional by simply placing a handkerchief over the flash head and increasing the exposure by a full f-stop.

You can get even softer lighting with a minimum of harsh shadows by bouncing the light off a reflective surface onto your subject. Light colored walls, ceilings, large sheets of paper, or even bed sheets make good reflectors. This type of lighting is similar to soft, hazy sunlight or window light. *NOTE:* When using color film, be careful about the color of the reflective surface, as the bounced light will take on the color of the reflector. Unless you are trying for special effects, it's a good idea to use a white or gray colored surface.

First set the Mode Selector on the 253 to manual 'M'. To determine the proper exposure when using bounce flash, use any *ONE* of the following methods:

1 — In rooms of average size and color, a good general rule is to open your lens 2 f-stops wider than if you were shooting direct.

OR

2 — Find the total flash-to-reflector-to-subject distance on the Calculator Dial and note the f-stop indicated above that distance. Open your lens one f-stop wider than indicated on the dial. *EXAMPLE:* Using ASA 25 film, photographing a subject at a total bounce distance of 12 feet, set your lens to f2.

OR

3 — If the total bounce distance does not appear on the Calculator Dial, first measure the total distance from the flash to the reflecting surface to the subject. Then, divide that total distance into the flash guide number for the film you are using. Note the resulting number (rounded off to the nearest f-stop), and open your lens one f-stop wider.

EXAMPLE: Using ASA 25 film at a total bounce distance of 15 feet, Guide No. 35 \div 15 ft. = 2.3; set your lens to f2.0 or a little wider if the bounce surface is heavily textured.

For bounce flash, remove the flash unit from your camera and aim it at a midpoint on the reflecting surface between the flash and the subject.

Mirrors

Never shoot flash pictures straight into mirrors, glass or other highly reflective surfaces, as the resulting reflections may ruin your pictures. Stand at an angle so that any reflections will be directed away from the camera. *HINT:* If you can't see yourself in the mirror, you're safe.

Simulating Sunlight

There are times when the sun disappears, but the picture calls for sunlight. Your electronic flash can then be used as the main light and very successfully simulate sunlight.

When you wish to simulate sunlight outdoors in dull weather, first determine the proper exposure for the natural daylight and then stop down one full f-stop. Determine the corresponding flash-to-subject distance for that f-stop. Set your flash at that distance. The flash will then serve as the dominant light source, and the natural light will serve as fill light.

Be sure to set the Mode Selector of your 253 to manual 'M' for simulating sunlight.

Open flash

This technique involves firing the flash manually

while the camera shutter is open. You can use it for a variety of creative effects. For example, while the shutter is open the film records both the image lit by the existing light and the image lit by the flash. You can capture both a sharp and a blurred image in the same picture to create a feeling of movement. Or, in a large dark interior you can open the shutter and fire the flash several times from different positions until you have lit the entire scene.

Synchronization speed

When taking pictures with your Vivitar electronic flash, always try to use the fastest shutter speed that provides full electronic flash synchronization (refer to your camera instructions for this information). This will eliminate 'ghosts' or blurry images of brightly lit objects in the background.

Group shots

Don't lose some of your friends in the shadows! Be sure that the whole group is about the same distance from the camera. If you're not careful people closest to the camera will be overexposed or 'washed out' and those furthest away will be underexposed because not enough light reached their spot in the picture.

Flash fill

Electronic flash can be used outdoors to 'fill-in' shadow areas. It softens hard shadows resulting from bright sunlight and is particularly useful with color slide film, which can record only a limited contrast range. Here is a simple procedure which you can modify according to your preference. Set your camera's shutter speed and f-stop for a proper exposure of the subject without flash. Keep in mind that only some shutter speeds can be synchronized with the flash. Divide the flash guide number for the film you are using by the f-stop you have set. This will give you the flash-to-subject distance for a bright fill. For a normal fill, move the flash back half again the distance and for a weaker fill (not recommended with color slide film) double the bright fill distance.

Set the Mode Selector of your 253 to manual 'M' for flash fill.

Vivitar Model 253 specifications

Manual operation

Guide Numbers (ASA-Feet):

ASA Film Speed	25	64	80	100	125	160	200	400	800
----------------	----	----	----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

Flash Guide No.	35	56	63	70	78	89	99	140	198
-----------------	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	-----	-----

Guide Numbers (DIN-Meters):

DIN Film Speed	15	19	20	21	22	23	24	27	30
----------------	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----

Flash Guide No.	11	17	20	21	24	27	30	43	61
-----------------	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----

Automatic operation

Auto f-stop settings to the closest half f-stop:

Film Speed: ASA	25	64*	80*	100*	125*	160*	200*	400	800
-----------------	----	-----	-----	------	------	------	------	-----	-----

DIN	15	19	20	21	22	23	24	27	30
-----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----

RED Mode	2	3.4	3.4	4	4.8	4.8	5.6	8	11
----------	---	-----	-----	---	-----	-----	-----	---	----

BLUE Mode	4	6.7	6.7	8	9.5	9.5	11	16	22
-----------	---	-----	-----	---	-----	-----	----	----	----

*These ASA film speeds differ by only $\frac{1}{3}$ of an f-stop. The resulting change in exposure is so slight that a change in the Auto f-stop may not be indicated.

Automatic operating ranges:

RED Mode 2 ft. to 17½ ft. (0.6 m to 5.3 m)

BLUE Mode 2 ft. to 8½ ft. (0.6 m to 2.6 m)

Automatic Sensor Measuring Angle: 20°

General specifications

BCPS (Beam Candle Power Seconds): 980 in manual mode

Recycle Time (AC or DC): 5 seconds

(When using battery power, recycle time is based on an average of the fifth flash with a fresh battery. Recycling takes longer as the battery drains.)

Flash Duration (approx.):

1/1000 second (manual)

1/1000 to 1/35,000 second (automatic)

Color Temperature: 5500° Kelvin

Angles of Illumination:

55° vertical, 55° horizontal

Operating Position: Vertical

Power Sources:

DC — One 9V alkaline battery (Mallory MN 1604 or equivalent) (not included)

AC — 120/220V with optional AC adapter

Flashes per Battery: 170+

Camera/Electronic Flash Synchronization

Connections: Shutter Cord, Hot Shoe

Weight (without Battery): 4-3/4 oz. (135 g)

Dimensions: 1-1/4" x 3-11/16" x 3-5/16"
(32 mm x 94 mm x 84 mm) (less the mounting
foot)

Accessories Included: Vivitar PC-1 12" Shutter
Cord

Accessories Available: Vivitar PC-31 3-foot Shutter
Cord, Vivitar Remote Flash Triggers; Vivitar SB-1
AC Adapter

Specifications subject to change without notice.

NOTES:

Notes
