

GoPro Hero7 review

by Team Backscatter

GoPro is out with the latest in its HERO line, the GoPro HERO7 Black. Below is everything you need to know when taking this powerful little action camera underwater.

So what's new and exciting about GoPro HERO7 Black? The biggest new features are the Hypersmooth image stabilization, overall improved image quality, and some tweaks to their performance tiers, specifically the GoPro HERO7 Black, GoPro HERO7 Silver, and GoPro HERO7 White editions of the HERO7 camera.

Hypersmooth—Pro Level Gimble Like Image Stabilization

Hypersmooth Image Stabilization is the driving feature of the new Black camera. It's definitely been the most talked about, and it's safe to say that you can believe most of the hype. The new stabilization is really noticeable and instantly provides a very welcome boost to the smoothness of video clips.

Hypersmooth is a bit more obvious topside when encountering bumpy terrain or even just handheld shakiness, but we saw the benefit underwater as well. It adds that extra little layer of polish that grants a

cinematic-style and grace to your shots.

With a firmware update, Hypersmooth is available at all resolutions. Originally, the new stabilization was only available up to a maximum resolution and frame rate of 2.7K at 60 frames a second.

Improved Color, Contrast, & Clarity

For image quality, when we compared to clips from the GoPro HERO6 and GoPro HERO7 Black side-by-side, we can see an immediate improvement to the color, contrast, and clarity coming right out of the camera. The blues are more blue, shadows are darker and blacks richer, while highlights are also capturing more detail. It's not a major difference, but the overall color saturation, contrast detail, and image clarity is a noticeable improvement in our opinion. It just looks a little bit better.

We always say that the two most important aspects of underwater video are color and stability, and the GoPro HERO7 Black has shown us that GoPro has stepped up their game in each of these departments. When



Side by Side - Backscatter Pro Team Member Robin Dodd shooting the GoPro HERO7 Black and GoPro HERO6 side by side to get test footage of how these cameras compare against each other in Monterey, CA. ©Thomas Anderson

you consider this is also one of the most economical and easy ways to get into shooting 4k 60p content underwater, it's pretty easy to see why we're calling this the Best GoPro yet.

Only One HERO7 for Scuba

With the GoPro HERO7 Black, GoPro has discontinued the 5 and 6 models, and instead now offers three different performance tiers of the 7 with the GoPro HERO7 Black, GoPro HERO7 Silver, and GoPro HERO7 White editions. The GoPro HERO7 Black Edition is the only model that is compatible with the Super Suit dive housing. The issue with the Silver and White editions is the inability to remove the protective lens cover, which is required for the camera to fit in the Super Suit. This is the same Super Suit that GoPro HERO5 Black and GoPro HERO6 used, so if you are upgrading camera models, you will not need to purchase a new housing.

Even though the camera itself is waterproof, you need the Super Suit housing to take the camera past its 33 feet or 10-meter depth rating.

The Super Suit is rated to 196 ft or 60 meters. Another benefit of the GoPro Super Suit housing is it enables the use of FLIP Filters to get the best underwater color that we possibly can from this camera.

Even More Features

GoPro added a couple more camera features that are worth mentioning. The TimeWarp video feature is a stabilized time-lapse video mode. It can still do 1080 Full HD 240p frames per second video for ultra slow motion. That's up to 8x slowed down.

The touchscreen feels crisp and responsive. They've updated the layout a bit, but the fundamentals are about the same as the 5 and 6. Settings can be accessed via the menus in the touchscreen.

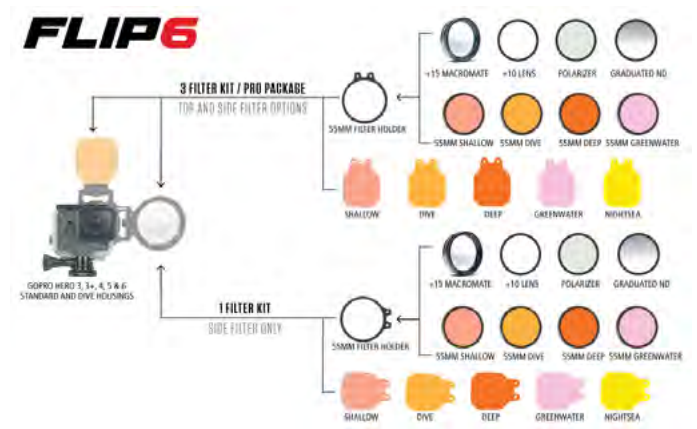


Backscatter Pro Team Member Dylan Silver shooting the GoPro HERO7 Black and FLIP6 Three Filter Kit with the GREENWATER filter to test the new color range of the GoPro HERO7 Black in Monterey, CA.
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Limited Macro Control

There is one camera function that's disappointing. GoPro still has not implemented a way to change the field of view to NARROW without using the touchscreen. Divers can change from wide to linear, but do not have the ability to zoom when the camera is in the Super Suit housing. Macro shooters are going to feel the pain on this one, as they have with the GoPro HERO6. Users can set this field of view before putting the camera in the housing. But if you change a mode and change back, it resets, making it impossible to switch back-and-forth between macro and wide on the same dive.

There are some workarounds, like shooting in 4K Wide and just cropping in post, or setting the camera up and disabling any sleep modes or screensavers that would reset the FOV. Neither of



Flip6 Is Compatible with HERO7 Black Right Out of the Box

these are as seamless as just being able to have a way to set the FOV to narrow using the menu.

Conclusion

Overall, it's easy to say that the GoPro HERO7 Black is the best GoPro yet. Hypersmooth gives clips buttery stability. The image quality packs solid contrast, clarity, and color, especially when paired with FLIP Filters. It's got some creative features and modes to use for creating stories and compelling shots. Whether it's your first underwater camera system or just a component of something larger, it's worth packing for your next dive.

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