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DUMMIES®

by Julie Adair King



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Introduction

Nikon. The name has been associated with top-flight photography equipment for generations. And now, with the introduction of its V1 and J1 cameras, Nikon brings its stellar reputation to an entirely new breed of photographic tool: the Nikon 1 compact system camera. A photographer's dream, Nikon 1 models offer the flexibility of interchangeable lenses and superior image quality in a compact, lightweight body. Yet despite their small size, these cameras are big on power and control, providing all the features a photography enthusiast could want.

In fact, both cameras offer so *many* features that sorting them all out can be more than a little confusing, especially if you're new to digital photography. Dig through the camera manual, and you encounter all sorts of techie terms — *resolution*, *aperture*, *white balance*, and so on — on top of a seemingly endless array of camera buttons and menu items. If you're like many people, you may be so overwhelmed by it all that you haven't yet ventured beyond the fully automatic picture-taking mode, which is a shame because it's sort of like buying a Porsche and never actually taking it on the road.

Therein lies the point of *Nikon 1 J1/V1 For Dummies*. Through this book, you can discover not just what each bell and whistle on your camera does, but also when, where, why, and how to put it to best use. Unlike many photography books, this one doesn't require any previous knowledge of photography or digital imaging to make sense of things, either. In classic *For Dummies* style, everything is explained in easy-to-understand language, with lots of illustrations to help clear up any confusion.

In short, what you have in your hands is the paperback version of an in-depth photography workshop tailored specifically to your Nikon picture-taking powerhouse.

A Quick Look at What's Ahead

This book is organized into four parts, each devoted to a different aspect of using your camera. Although chapters flow in a sequence that's designed to take you from absolute beginner to experienced user, I've also tried to make each chapter as self-standing as possible so you can explore the topics that interest you in any order you please.

Here's a brief preview of what you can find in each part of the book:

- ✓ **Part I: Fast Track to Super Snaps:** Part I contains four chapters to help you get up and running. Chapter 1 offers a tour of the external controls on your camera, shows you how to navigate camera menus, and walks

you through initial camera setup. Chapter 2 explains basic picture-taking options, such as shutter-release mode and Image Quality settings, and Chapter 3 shows you how to use the camera's fully automatic exposure modes, the Scene Auto Selector and Smart Photo Selector modes. Chapter 4 explains the ins and outs of movie-making with the J1 and V1 and also introduces you to the Motion Snapshot exposure mode.

- ✓ **Part II: Working with Picture Files:** This part offers two chapters, both dedicated to after-the-shot topics. Chapter 5 explains how to review your pictures on the camera monitor, delete unwanted images, and protect your favorites from accidental erasure. Chapter 6 offers a look at some photo software options — including Nikon ViewNX 2, which ships free with your camera — and then guides you through the process of downloading pictures to your computer and preparing them for printing and online sharing.
- ✓ **Part III: Taking Creative Control:** Chapters in this part help you unleash the full creative power of your camera by moving into the advanced shooting modes (P, S, A, and M). Chapter 7 covers the critical topic of exposure, and Chapter 8 explains how to manipulate focus and color. Chapter 9 summarizes all the techniques explained in earlier chapters, providing a quick-reference guide to the camera settings and shooting strategies that produce the best results for portraits, action shots, landscapes, and close-ups.
- ✓ **Part IV: The Part of Tens:** In the famous *For Dummies* tradition, the book concludes with two “top-ten” lists containing additional bits of information and advice. Chapter 10 provides ten camera maintenance and emergency repair tips, and Chapter 11 wraps up the book by detailing some camera features that, although not found on most “Top Ten Reasons I Bought My Nikon 1 camera” lists, are nonetheless interesting, useful on occasion, or a bit of both.

Icons and Other Stuff to Note

If this isn't your first *For Dummies* book, you may be familiar with the large, round icons that decorate its margins. If not, here's your very own icon-decoder ring:



A Tip icon flags information that will save you time, effort, money, or some other valuable resource, including your sanity. Tips also point out techniques that help you get the best results from specific camera features.



When you see this icon, look alive. It indicates a potential danger zone that can result in much wailing and teeth-gnashing if ignored. In other words, this is stuff that you really don't want to learn the hard way.



Lots of information in this book is of a technical nature — digital photography is a technical animal, after all. But if I present a detail that is useful mainly for impressing your technology-geek friends, I mark it with this icon.



I apply this icon either to introduce information that is especially worth storing in your brain's long-term memory or to remind you of a fact that may have been displaced from that memory by some other pressing fact.



Most of the information in this book applies to both V1 and J1 cameras. But if a feature is available only on one model, I mark the paragraph with one of these two icons to let you know which camera I'm referencing.

Additionally, I need to point out these additional details that will help you use this book:

- ✓ **Other margin art:** Replicas of some of your camera's buttons and onscreen symbols also appear in the margins of some paragraphs. I include these to provide a quick reminder of the appearance of the button or feature being discussed.
- ✓ **Software menu commands:** In sections that cover software, a series of words connected by an arrow indicates commands that you choose from the program menus. For example, if a step tells you to “Choose File→Convert Files,” click the File menu to unfurl it and then click the Convert Files command on the menu.
- ✓ **Figures:** Most figures in this book show menus and screens as they appear on the V1. Rest assured that things look the same on the J1 unless I specifically say otherwise. When a feature is provided only on the J1, I show the screens from that camera. You'll notice that the J1 screens are a little smaller than the V1 screens in the figures; the difference has to do with the way that I capture the video feed from the camera in order to create the figures. The J1 has only an HD (high-definition) video feed, which produces screens with a different aspect ratio than those taken from the V1, which I capture using the traditional, analog (A/V) video feed. Don't think too much about it — I bring it up only so that readers who pay attention to such things won't be distracted with wondering why the screens are two different sizes.

Occasionally, we have updates to our technology books. If this book does have technical updates, they will be posted at www.dummies.com/go/nikon1j1v1updates.

eCheat Sheet

As a little added bonus, you can find an electronic version of the famous *For Dummies* Cheat Sheet at www.dummies.com/cheatsheet/nikon1j1v1. The Cheat Sheet contains a quick-reference guide to all the external controls and exposure modes on your camera. Log on, print it out, and tuck it in your camera bag for times when you don't want to carry this book with you.

Practice, Be Patient, and Have Fun!

To wrap up this preamble, I want to stress that if you initially think that digital photography is too confusing or too technical for you, you're in very good company. *Everyone* finds this stuff a little mind-boggling at first. So take it slowly, experimenting with just one or two new camera settings or techniques at first. Then, each time you go on a photo outing, make it a point to add one or two more shooting skills to your repertoire.

I know that it's hard to believe when you're just starting out, but it really won't be long before everything starts to come together. With some time, patience, and practice, you'll soon wield your camera like a pro, dialing in the necessary settings to capture your creative vision almost instinctively.

So without further ado, I invite you to grab your camera, a cup of whatever it is you prefer to sip while you read, and start exploring the rest of this book. Your Nikon 1 camera is the perfect partner for your photographic journey, and I thank you for allowing me, through this book, to serve as your tour guide.

Part I

Fast Track to Super Snaps

The 5th Wave

By Rich Tennant

Mona suffered from a rare disorder known as Bluritis, which mostly just affected her appearance in photographs.

©RICH TENNANT

shoot - shutter
speed still seems
too slow.



In this part . . .

Making sense of all the controls on your camera isn't something you can do in an afternoon — heck, in a week, or maybe even a month. But that doesn't mean that you can't take great pictures today. By using your camera's Scene Auto Selector and Smart Photo Selector shooting modes, you can capture terrific images with very little effort. All you do is compose the scene, and the camera takes care of almost everything else.

The part shows you how to take best advantage of these two point-and-shoot exposure modes and also addresses some basic setup steps and gets you familiar with the camera menus, buttons, and other controls. In addition, chapters in this part explain how to obtain the very best picture quality, whether you shoot in an automatic or manual mode, and how to use your camera's Movie and Motion Snapshot shooting modes.



Getting the Lay of the Land

In This Chapter

- ▶ Familiarizing yourself with the monitor and lens
- ▶ Working with a memory card
- ▶ Exploring external controls and menus
- ▶ Customizing basic operations
- ▶ Restoring the camera's default settings

I still remember the day that I bought my first interchangeable lens camera. I was excited to finally move up from my one-button point-and-shoot model, but I was a little anxious, too. My new pride and joy sported several unfamiliar buttons and dials, and the explanations in the camera manual clearly were written for someone with an engineering degree. And then there was the whole business of attaching the lens — what if I made a mistake and broke it before I even took any pictures?

If you're feeling similarly insecure, you're not alone — working with a new camera *is* a little intimidating. But the information in this chapter should banish any anxiety and help you get comfortable with your camera. I introduce you to each external camera control, explain how to navigate menus, and cover a few other important basics, such as how to work with lenses and memory cards. In no time at all, your camera will start to feel like a familiar friend.



Attaching and Using Lenses

Your camera has a lens mount that's classified as a Nikon 1 mount. As I write this, Nikon offers just a handful of 1-mount lenses, including the 10–30mm zoom lens featured in this book. However, you can buy the FT1 adapter (approximately \$249) that enables you to attach lenses that have an F mount



as well. If you attach an AF-S lens, autofocus is supported, but in a limited way. For example, Face-priority AF, which automatically detects and focuses on faces, and Subject Tracking autofocus, which tracks focus on a moving subject, are not supported. You can find more details about the lens adapter at the Nikon website.

The *AF* in AF-S stands for *autofocus*, and the *S* stands for *silent wave*, a Nikon autofocus technology.

When using a Nikon 1 lens, follow these steps to mount it on the camera body:

1. **Turn off the camera and remove the cap that covers the lens mount on the front of the camera.**
2. **Remove the cap that covers the back of the lens.**
3. **Hold the lens in front of the camera so that the mounting index on the lens aligns with the one on the camera.**

Figure 1-1 offers a look at the mounting index as it appears on the 10–30mm Nikon 1 lens. On other lenses, the mounting index may instead be a little white dot; check your lens manual for complete operating instructions. The mounting index on the camera body is marked with a white dot, as shown in the figure. (The figure shows the V1 camera; the mounting index on the J1 is identical.)

4. **Keeping the mounting indexes aligned, position the lens on the camera's lens mount.**
5. **Turn the lens in a counter-clockwise direction until the lens clicks into place.**

To put it another way, turn the lens toward the side of the camera that sports the shutter button, as indicated by the red arrow in the figure.

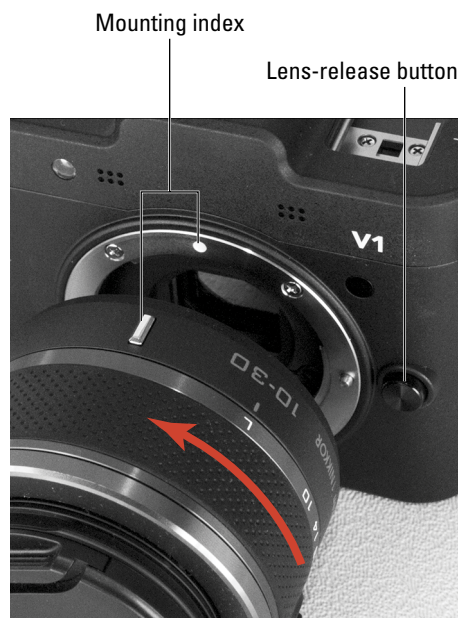


Figure 1-1: When attaching the lens, rotate it in the direction indicated by the arrow.

To remove a lens, first retract the lens, as outlined in the next section, if your lens offers that feature. Then press the lens-release button (labeled in Figure 1-1), and turn the lens toward that button — that is, the opposite of what the arrow indicates in the figure — until it detaches from the lens mount. Put the rear protective cap onto the back of the lens and, if you aren't putting another lens on the camera, cover the lens mount with its protective cap, too.



Always attach or switch lenses in a clean environment to reduce the risk of getting dust, dirt, and other contaminants inside the camera or lens. Changing lenses on a sandy beach, for example, isn't a good idea. For added safety, point the camera body slightly down when performing this maneuver; doing so helps prevent any flotsam in the air from being drawn into the camera by gravity.

Extending and collapsing the lens

The Nikon 1 10–30mm and 30–110mm lenses can be collapsed to make them even more petite. For example, Figure 1-2 shows the 10–30mm zoom lens in its retracted state (left side of the figure) and its extended position (right).



Figure 1-2: To extend and retract the lens, press the lens button while turning the zoom barrel.

To extend the lens, press the little button on the side of the lens while rotating the zoom barrel on the lens toward the shutter button side of the camera. (The zoom barrel is the movable ring that surrounds the button; refer to Figure 1-3.) To retract it, press the button while rotating the zoom barrel in the opposite direction. Always retract the lens before removing it from the camera.



Extending the lens also turns on the camera. Retracting the lens doesn't shut the camera off, however. If you turn on the camera while the lens is retracted, a message appears on the monitor asking you to extend the lens before shooting.

Things work a little differently for the 10–100 power zoom lens. This lens extends automatically when you turn the camera on. And unless you move the switch on the side of the lens from Off to Lock, the lens automatically retracts when you turn the camera off.

Zooming in and out

If you bought the Nikon 1 10–30mm or 30–110mm lens, it has a movable zoom barrel. The location of the zoom barrel on the 10–30mm lens is shown in Figure 1-3. To zoom in or out with these lenses, rotate the zoom barrel.

The numbers at the edge of the zoom barrel, by the way, represent *focal lengths*. If that term is new to you, Chapter 8 explains it fully. In the meantime, just know that when the kit lens is mounted on the camera, the little line labeled *focal length indicator* in Figure 1-3 represents the current focal length. In Figure 1-3, for example, the focal length is 10mm.

The 10–100mm Nikon 1 lens has a power zoom function; to zoom this lens, you press the zoom switch on the lens. (See the lens manual for complete details about operating the power zoom.) This lens doesn't have the focal length markings that you see in Figure 1-3; instead, you see a zoom guide in the display. See “Customizing the Monitor Display,” later in this chapter, for information about display modes.



Figure 1-3: The focal length indicator tells you the current focal length of the zoom lens.

Using the Viewfinder



With the V1, you can choose to use the electronic viewfinder, shown in Figure 1-4, to compose images rather than framing them using the monitor. But that's not all this viewfinder can do: You can also view your pictures and camera menus in the viewfinder.

Here's what you need to know about using the viewfinder:

- ✓ **Switching to the viewfinder:** The camera automatically turns off the monitor and turns on the viewfinder any time you put your eye up to the viewfinder. The secret to this automatic switching is the little eye sensor labeled in the figure. Whenever the sensor is covered — by your eye, face, whatever — the camera assumes that you want to use the viewfinder and so makes the switch for you.

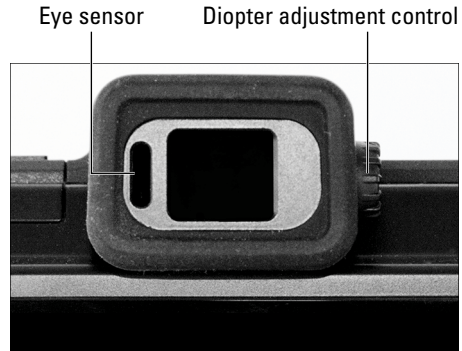


Figure 1-4: Use the diopter adjustment control to set the viewfinder focus for your eyesight.

- ✓ **Waking up the viewfinder:** By default, the viewfinder shuts off after 30 seconds of inactivity, as does the monitor. To bring the viewfinder back to life, just give the shutter button a quick half press and then release it. See the section “Taking a Few Critical Setup Steps” to find out how to adjust the automatic shut-off timing.
- ✓ **Adjusting the viewfinder to your eyesight:** Positioned on the right side of the rubber eyepiece is a tiny dial that enables you to adjust the focus of your viewfinder to accommodate your eyesight. Figure 1-4 offers a close-up look at the dial, which is officially known as the *diopter adjustment control*.



If you don't adjust the viewfinder, scenes that appear out of focus through the viewfinder may actually be sharply focused through the lens, and vice versa.

The Nikon manual warns you not to poke yourself in the eye as you adjust the viewfinder focus. This warning seems so obvious that I laugh every time I read it — which makes me feel doubly stupid the next time I poke myself in the eye as I perform this maneuver.

Working with Memory Cards

Instead of recording images on film, digital cameras store pictures on *memory cards*. Your camera uses a specific type of memory card — an *SD card* (for *Secure Digital*).



Most SD cards sold today carry the designation SDHC (for *High Capacity*) or SDXC (for *eXtended Capacity*), depending on how many gigabytes (GB) of data they hold. SDHC cards hold from 4GB to 32GB of data; the SDXC moniker is assigned to cards with capacities greater than 32GB.



Do you need high-speed memory cards?

Secure Digital (SD) memory cards are rated according to *speed classes*: Class 2, Class 4, Class 6, and Class 10, with the number indicating the minimum number of *megabytes* (units of computer data) that can be transferred per second. A Class 2 card, for example, has a minimum transfer speed of 2 megabytes, or MB, per second. In addition to these speed classes, The Powers That Be recently added a new category of speed rating, UHS, which stands for UltraHigh Speed. UHS cards also carry a number designation; at present, there is only one class of UHS card, UHS 1. These cards currently offer the fastest performance.

Of course, with the speed increase comes a price increase, which leads to the question: Do you really have a need for speed? The answer is “maybe.” If you shoot a lot of movies, I recommend a Class 6 card at minimum — the faster data-transfer rate helps ensure smooth movie-recording and playback performance. For still photography, users who shoot at the highest

resolution or prefer the NEF (Raw) file format may also gain from high-speed cards; both options increase file size and, thus, the time needed to store the picture on the card. (See Chapter 2 for details.)

As for picture downloading, how long it takes files to shuffle from card to computer depends not just on card speed, but also on the capabilities of your computer and, if you use a memory card reader to download files, on the speed of that device. (Chapter 6 covers the file-downloading process.)

Long story short, if you want to push your camera to its performance limits, a high-speed card is worth the expense, especially for video recording. But if you’re primarily interested in still photography or you already own slower-speed cards, try using them first — you may find that they’re more than adequate for most shooting scenarios.

The following list offers a primer in the care and feeding of your memory cards:

- ✓ **Inserting a card:** The slot for the card is found in the battery compartment on the bottom of the camera. To install a card, turn off the camera and then put the card in the card slot with the label facing the back of the camera, as shown in Figure 1-5. Push the card into the slot until it clicks into place. After the card is inserted, a tiny memory card access light blinks for a second to let you know the card is inserted properly. On the V1, the light is just below the Menu button; on the J1, it’s just above the Disp button.
- ✓ **Formatting a card:** The first time you use a new memory card or insert a card that’s been used in other devices (such as an MP3 player), you need to *format* it. Formatting ensures that the card is properly prepared to record your pictures. Here’s what you need to know about this important housekeeping task:

WARNING!



- *Formatting erases everything on your memory card.* So before formatting, be sure that you have copied any pictures or other data to your computer.
- *Format the card by using the Format Memory Card option on the Setup menu.* (The upcoming section “Ordering from Camera Menus” explains how to use the menus, if you need help.) Some computer programs enable you to format cards as well, but it’s not a good idea to go that route. Your camera is better equipped to format cards optimally.
- *The message “This memory card is not formatted; Format the card?”* appears if the camera detects a card that needs formatting. Select Yes and press the OK button to start the formatting process. If you instead see the message “This memory card cannot be used,” the camera is having trouble reading the card data. Formatting the card may help; just remember that you lose any data stored on the card if you format it.



Figure 1-5: Insert the card with the label facing the camera back.

- ✓ **Removing a card:** After making sure that the memory card access light is off, indicating that the camera has finished recording your most recent photo, turn off the camera. Open the battery chamber door, depress the memory card slightly until you hear a little click, and then let go. The card pops halfway out of the slot, enabling you to grab it by the tail and remove it.

If you turn on the camera when no card is installed, the message *No memory card* appears. If you do have a card in the camera and you get this message, try taking the card out and reinserting it.

- ✓ **Handling cards:** Don’t touch the gold contacts on the back of the card. (See the left card in Figure 1-6.) When cards aren’t in use, store them in the protective cases they came in or in a

Don’t touch Lock switch



Figure 1-6: Avoid touching the gold contacts on the card.

REMEMBER



memory-card wallet. Keep cards away from extreme heat and cold as well.

- ✓ **Locking cards:** The tiny switch on the side of the card, labeled *lock switch* in Figure 1-6, enables you to lock your card, which prevents any data from being erased or recorded to the card. Press the switch toward the bottom of the card to lock the card contents; press it toward the top of the card to unlock the data. (If you insert a locked card into the camera, you see a message on the monitor alerting you to the fact.)

You also can protect individual images on a card from accidental erasure by using the camera's Protect feature, which I cover in Chapter 5.

Exploring External Camera Controls

Scattered across your camera's exterior are numerous controls that you use to change picture-taking settings, review your photos, and perform various other operations. In later chapters, I discuss all your camera's functions in detail and provide the exact steps to follow to access them. This section provides just a basic road map to the external controls plus a quick introduction to each.

Topside controls

Your virtual tour begins with the bird's-eye views shown in Figures 1-7 (J1) and 1-8 (V1). There are a number of controls of note here:

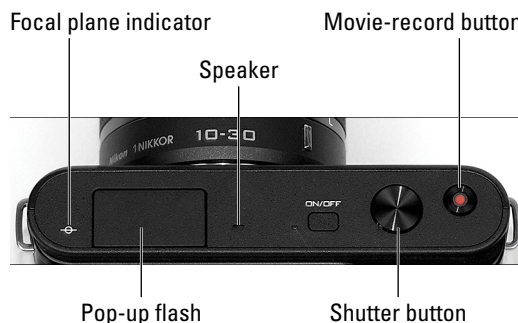


Figure 1-7: Here's the layout of the features on top of the J1.

- ✓ **On/Off switch:** You don't need me to explain the purpose of this one, of course. But do remember one fact about powering on the camera: Extending the lens barrel on the Nikon 1 10–30mm and 30–110mm lenses also turns on the camera; retracting the lens doesn't shut down the camera, however.

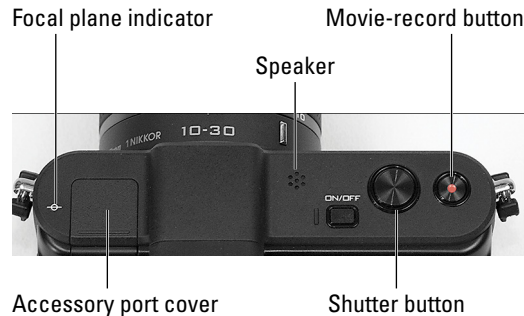


Figure 1-8: The V1 has an accessory port instead of a built-in flash.



- ✓ **Shutter button:** I'm pretty sure you already figured out this button, too. But you may not be aware that you need to press the shutter button in two stages: Press and hold the button halfway and wait for the camera to initiate exposure metering and, if you're using autofocus, to set the focusing distance. Then press the button the rest of the way to take the picture.
- ✓ **Movie-record button:** As its name implies, you use this button to start and stop recording. With the J1, you must first set the Mode dial on the back of the camera to Movie mode. With the V1, you can record videos when the Mode dial is set either to Movie mode or Still Image mode. See Chapter 2 to find out about these two shooting modes, and visit Chapter 4 to find out how to adjust movie-recording settings.
- ✓ **Built-in flash:** The J1 has its own flash, which you pop up via the little flash button on the back of the camera.
- ✓ **Multi accessory port:** Here's where you attach the optional SB-N5 flash or the GP-N100 GPS unit to the V1. When not in use, the contacts on the port are protected by a little black cover (as shown in Figure 1-8); remove the cover to expose the contacts and attach the flash or GPS unit.

In addition to these two accessories, you can mount the Nikon ME-1 stereo microphone using the multi-accessory port. You attach the microphone cable to the microphone port on the side of the camera, however (see the upcoming section “Hidden connections.”) The accessory port mount is just a way to keep the microphone in place atop the camera.

- ✓ **Speaker:** When you play movies that contain sound, the audio comes wafting through the holes labeled *Speaker* in Figures 1-7 and 1-8.
- ✓ **Focal plane indicator:** Should you need to know the exact distance between your subject and the camera, the *focal plane indicator* is key. The mark, labeled in Figures 1-7 and 1-8, indicates the plane at which



Figure 1-10: Whether you use the J1 (left) or V1 (right), the Multi Selector is key to navigating menus and choosing camera settings.

- ✓ **Zoom lever:** Labeled in Figure 1-10, this lever enables you to magnify pictures during playback or to switch from single-image view to index (thumbnails) view. During shooting, you use the lever to adjust certain settings. For example, if you shoot in aperture-priority autoexposure mode, you press the lever up or down to select the f-stop you want to use. (Chapter 7 explains this exposure mode and f-stops.) You also use the lever to set focusing distance when you focus manually with a Nikon 1 lens; see Chapter 8 for help with that option.
- ✓ **Mode dial:** You select a basic exposure mode via this dial, labeled in Figure 1-10. You can choose from Still Image mode, Motion Snapshot



mode, Smart Photo Selector mode, or Movie mode. Chapter 2 introduces you to all these modes.

- ✓ **Disp button:** Press this button to vary the type of information that appears on the monitor or, on the V1, to turn the monitor off altogether. (See the upcoming section “Customizing the Monitor Display” for details.)

On the V1, pressing the Disp button also changes the amount of information displayed in the electronic viewfinder. But you can’t use the button to turn off the viewfinder display — it remains on until you take your eye away from the viewfinder.

- ✓ **Playback button:** Press this button to switch the camera into picture review mode. Chapter 5 details playback features.
- ✓ **Multi Selector/OK button:** This dual-natured control, labeled in Figure 1-10, plays a role in many camera functions. When navigating menus, you press the outer edges of the Multi Selector left, right, up, or down to scroll through menu options. You also use the Multi Selector buttons to scroll through pictures during playback. Alternatively, you can scroll by rotating the dial — just run your thumb around the outside of the dial to rotate it.

When no menus are displayed, pressing the up/down/right/left buttons invoke the feature that’s indicated by the button labels. Three of the buttons are identical on the V1 and J1; the bottom button serves different purposes on the two cameras. Here’s the rundown:

- *Top button:* Press the top button to activate AE (autoexposure) lock, a feature covered in Chapter 7. By default, the button locks autofocus at the same time that autoexposure is locked, but you can change this behavior through an option covered in Chapter 11.
- *Right button:* This handy button enables you to apply Exposure Compensation, another exposure feature that I discuss in Chapter 7.
- *Left button:* You use this button to turn on Self-Timer shooting, covered in Chapter 2.
- *Bottom button:* On the V1, pressing the bottom button provides access to the Focus mode, which you can read about in Chapter 8.
- *Bottom button:* On the J1, pressing the bottom button enables you to select a Flash mode, as detailed in Chapters 2 and 7.



- ✓ **Delete button:** Sporting a trash-can icon, the universal symbol for delete, this button enables you to erase pictures from your memory card. Chapter 5 has specifics.