

## Product Review

# FlipMino HD Camcorder Fits in Your Pocket

*Reviewed by Maria Arguello*

**Product:** The Flip MinoHD

**Company:** Pure Digital Technologies, Inc.

**URL:** [www.theflip.com](http://www.theflip.com)

**Mac System Requirements:** 1.66-GHz Intel CoreDuo or faster processor, 1 GB of RAM, OSX 10.4 or 10.5.

**Price:** \$229.99

**Rating:** 5 out of 5 Apples

I've been a long-time admirer and user of the Flip video since my first review in January 2007. At that time, I came across it while shopping for a video camcorder small enough to fit in a shirt pocket. And now Pure Digital adds a high-def member to its family: the \$229.99 Flip MinoHD.

It's touted as the world's smallest HD camcorder and at 3.3 ounces it is! It has four Gigabytes of internal memory and holds 60 minutes of video. There are seven touch-sensitive buttons: Press the red record button to start and stop, and press plus or minus to zoom in or out with a 2x digital zoom while recording. A play/pause button plays back videos and a delete button gets rid of unwanted footage to free up space; alternatively, videos can be offloaded to a computer. A left button to skip to previous video when paused and touch and hold to rewind during playback. A right button to skip to the next video when paused, and touch and hold to fast-forward during playback.

The Flip MinoHD comes with Pure Digital's improved software called FlipShare for both the Mac and PC, which I didn't use (this time) because I prefer using iMovie HD on my Mac. When my gadgets work together, I win.

The FlipShare software works with other Pure Digital camcorders and users of the older models will be prompted to upgrade. It allows you to browse, playback, organize and archive your videos. You can also edit, add music, titles, and save a still photo from the video. In one step, you can upload to AOL, MySpace, YouTube (not to Facebook, yet), and so on. And you can share your videos using email and greeting cards.

The video resolution is 1280 x or 720p but this high-definition footage is much too large to easily send to others in its original format, so it must be compressed to 480 x 270-pixel resolution for sharing with FlipShare. Pure Digital says they will enable HD sharing through a partner company early next year. It's also fully compatible with Apple's video

applications, including iMovie and iDVD.

I liked the quality of the footage, with its rich hues and sharp images, when played back on my Mac and my HD TV. The Mino's improved sound capture can pick up even distant conversations. The footage imports nicely into the Macintosh's iMovie 08 or the older iMovie HD. I connected the camcorder to a computer, using the built-in flip-out USB arm. I immediately found a DCIM folder containing the 60-minute video clips I had taken. I dragged them to iMovie HD, edited them, and shared them. I uploaded clips to YouTube, made a DVD and burned it to view it on my DVD player, made a QuickTime movie, sent some clips to my iPhone and iPod video with the H.264 video compression, and emailed certain clips to friends and family.

The Flip MinoHD can be personalized for free. At the Flip website you have many choices: Go to a design gallery, use your own image, use the pattern generator, or order solid black. I went to TheFlip.com and chose the Best Sellers category, Rock and Roll Heart Montage By The Flip Studio, and picked "Romance and Ink" as my choice. It suited me well.

The zoom is a smooth multi-step 2x digital. I still prefer to zoom with my feet by getting close to the subject, but the zoom is much improved from older models. There is a tripod mount. And you can preview captured video on the 1.5" screen with the screen resolution of 528 x 132 pixels, which is much too small to appreciate high-def. The internal bat-

tery life was sufficient for capturing my one-hour movie. The battery charges using the built-in USB arm.

The lens is fixed but with an aperture of f/2.4, so you're guaranteed great results in low-light environments.

Although this camcorder is for hobbyists, it can be used by anybody who wants to always have a handy small camcorder to capture priceless spontaneous moments. I can think of other uses for this mighty camcorder such as capturing video of a car accident, a brief demo of a gadget in a store, as a tape recorder for an important sound bite, and so on...

I've seen a lot of Flip video camcorder users this past year during the Olympics and during the Baseball World Series games and parade. It is one of my favorite gadgets after my iPhone. I still dream of the day the iPhone comes with a built-in camcorder. Until then, I love and will continue to show off my personalized Flip MinoHD.

