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Sigma 150-600mm f/5-6.3 DG OS HSM Contemporary Review

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Sigma 150-600mm f/5-6.3 DG OS HSM Contemporary Review - Gary Wolstenholme reviews the Sigma 150-600mm f/5-6.3 DG OS HSM Contemporary telephoto zoom lens.

Posted : 31 Mar 2015 10:41AM by Gary Wolstenholme

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Category : [Interchangeable Lenses](#)

Product : [Sigma 150-600mm f/5-6.3 DG OS HSM Contemporary](#)

Price : £900

Rating : ★★★★★

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Sigma 150-600mm f/5-6.3 DG OS HSM Contemporary Review

Gary Wolstenholme reviews the Sigma 150-600mm f/5-6.3 DG OS HSM Contemporary telephoto zoom lens. Posted : 31 Mar 2015 10:41AM by Gary Wolstenholme

<http://www.ephotozine.com/article/sigma-150-600mm-f-5-6-3-dg-os-hsm-contemporary-review-27247>

Sigma has been continually updating their lens lineup to fit into one of three categories, Art, Contemporary and Sports. This super-telephoto zoom lens fits into Sigma's 'Contemporary' line-up of lenses and this lens provides a lower priced alternative to their 150-600mm Sports optic. The difference in category means that this lens lacks weather sealing and has a slightly different optical formula. With a cost of around £900, it is very keenly priced for a lens providing a 600mm focal length and is around £600 less expensive than the Sports version. This lens is available in Canon, Nikon and Sigma mounts and in this review, we'll take a look at how the Canon mount version performs.

Sigma 150-600mm f/5-6.3 DG OS HSM C Handling and Features

Sigma 150 600mm F5-6.3 DG OS HSM C Lens

Weighing just under 2kg, this lens is not overly heavy for a 600mm lens, although some kind of support is still a good idea if using the lens for long periods of time. A tripod collar is included to allow a monopod or tripod to be attached easily. A high quality matt finish, and plastics and metals used for much of the construction create a robust impression. Although the lens itself lacks weather sealing, the mount has a rubber gasket to prevent the ingress of dust and moisture into the camera. The lens balances well on the Canon EOS 5D MkIII used for testing and is really quite hand-holdable for a lens of this size, but may feel more cumbersome in combination with some of the more compact SLR bodies available.

Autofocus is quick, thanks to the use of a Silent HSM motor. Focusing is performed internally, so the 95mm filter thread does not rotate, making this lens ideal for use with polarising and graduated filters, if you can afford them in that size, of course.

Manual focus adjustments can be made at any time by simply turning the thin focus ring on the lens barrel. Manual focusing is a pleasure as the focus ring is well damped, and smooth to operate. The close focusing distance of 2.8m is quite close for a 600mm lens, but not as close as you can focus with the Sports version. The zoom ring is smooth to operate too, although it does have a tendency to creep forward when pointed downwards. A switch to lock the lens at 150mm during transport is provided, which can also be used to hold the lens at 600mm. Unfortunately, the lock switch doesn't work at intermediate zoom settings.

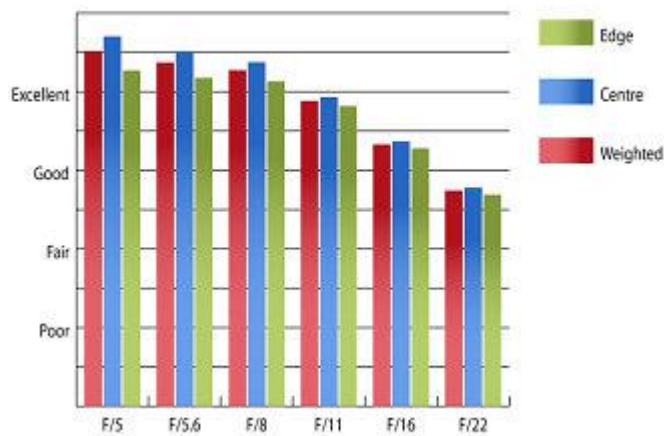
With care, it is possible to take sharp images hand held using the image stabiliser at shutter speeds as low as 1/80sec, around half the time. This is roughly three stops slower than the usual rule of thumb for shooting hand held will allow.

Sigma 150-600mm f/5-6.3 DG OS HSM C Performance

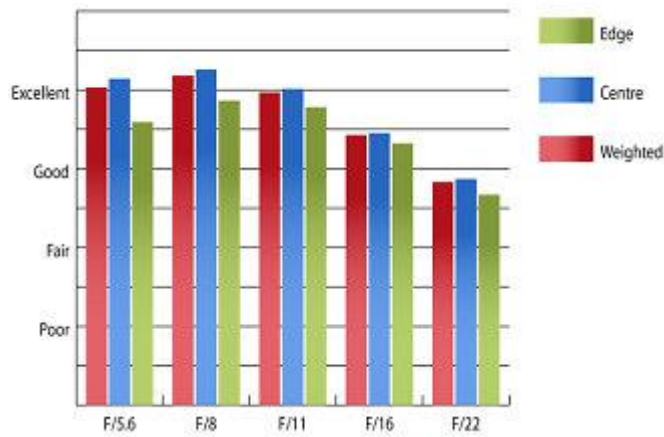
At 150mm, sharpness already approaches outstanding levels in the centre of the frame at maximum aperture and the clarity achieved towards the edges of the frame is excellent. There is no benefit to image quality with stopping down, unless it is a creative decision.

Zooming to 300mm results in excellent sharpness in the centre of the frame with very good sharpness towards the edges at maximum aperture. Peak performance is at f/8, where sharpness is excellent in the centre, and not too far behind towards the edges of the frame.

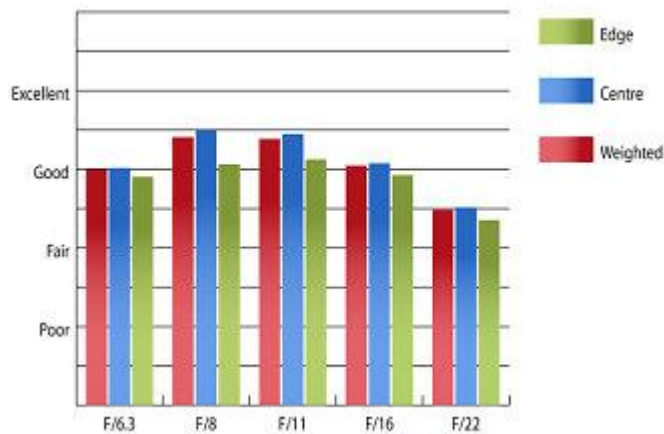
Finally, at 600mm, sharpness in the centre of the frame at maximum aperture is good, and not far behind towards the edges of the frame. Stopping down to between f/8 and f/11 results in peak performance for this focal length, with the lens producing very good sharpness in the centre and good sharpness towards the edges at this focal length.



MTF@150mm



MTF@300mm



MTF@600mm

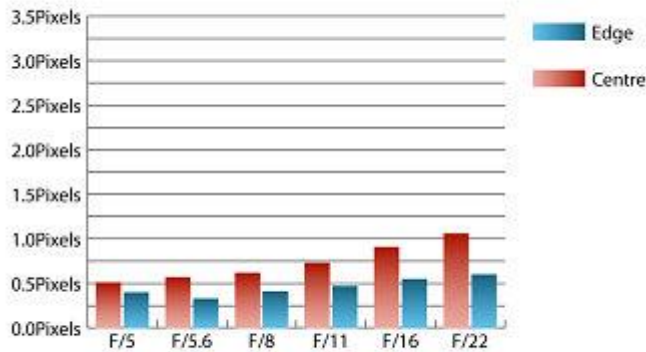
How to read our charts

The blue column represents readings from the centre of the picture frame at the various apertures and the green is from the edges. Averaging them out gives the red weighted column.

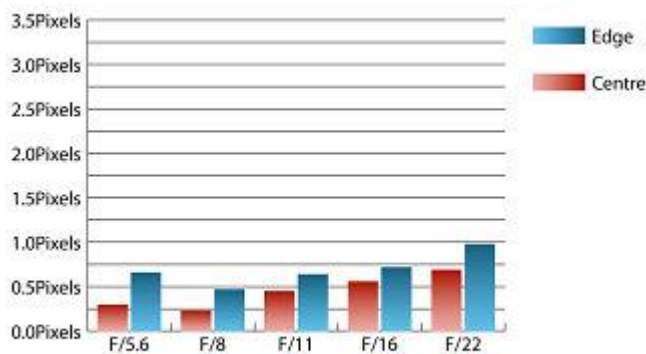
The scale on the left side is an indication of actual image resolution. The taller the column, the better the lens performance. Simple.

For this review, the lens was tested on a Canon EOS 5D Mark III using [Imatest](#).

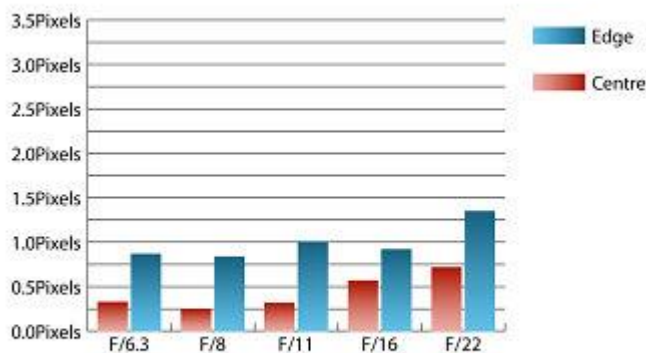
Chromatic aberrations are well enough controlled for a super-telephoto zoom lens with fringing only exceeding one pixel width at f/22 throughout the zoom range. This extremely low level of CA should pose few issues, even in large prints, or harsh crops from the edges of the frame.



CA@150mm



CA@300mm



CA@600mm

How to read our charts

Chromatic aberration is the lens' inability to focus on the sensor or film all colours of visible light at the same point. Severe chromatic aberration gives a noticeable fringing or a halo effect around sharp edges within the picture. It can be cured in software.

Apochromatic lenses have special lens elements (aspheric, extra-low dispersion etc) to minimize the problem, hence they usually cost more.

For this review, the lens was tested on a Canon EOS 5D Mark III using Imatest.

Falloff of illumination towards the corners is typical for a telephoto lens with a moderate maximum aperture. The corners are 1.62 stops darker than the centre at maximum aperture at 150mm and 1.51 stops darker at 600mm. Visually uniform illumination is achieved by f/8 at 150mm and f/11 at 600mm.

Pincushion distortion is present throughout the zoom range. At 150mm there is 1.82% pincushion distortion, which decreases to 1.01% at 600mm, which shouldn't cause issues in normal use. If absolutely straight lines are paramount, then you'll be glad to hear that the distortion pattern is uniform across the frame, which should make applying corrections in image editing software fairly straightforward.

A deep, circular hood is supplied as standard with the lens, which does a great job of protecting the lens from extraneous light that may cause unwanted flare and loss of contrast. During testing there were no issues with flare and contrast holds up well, even when shooting into the light.

Value For Money

Priced at around £900, this 150-600mm lens from Sigma appears to offer excellent value for money when compared to other lenses offering a similar field of view. Although this lens lacks the dust and moisture resistance of its more expensive Sports series equivalent, it is around £600 less expensive, so it may be worth it to you, if you can live with the slight compromise.

Another way to get a 600mm equivalent, but with a slightly faster maximum aperture would be to use Sigma's 120-300mm f/2.8 lens, which costs around £1940, with Sigma's TC-2001 teleconverter, which costs around £300. This combination will provide you with 600mm f/5.6, and the benefit of f/2.8 maximum aperture through the 120-300mm range without the converter.

Canon's 200-400mm f/4 L IS USM includes its own built-in 1.4x teleconverter, providing a maximum telephoto reach equivalent to a 560mm f/5.6 lens. Unfortunately, this lens costs around £8310, which is beyond the reach of most people.

Nikon's 200-400mm f/4 can be picked up for around £4890, which can be used with their TC-14e III teleconverter, which costs around £310.

Tamron offers the 150-600mm f/5-6.3 Di VC USD lens for around £900, or if your budget is more limited, the 200-500mm Di f/5-6.3 lens costs around £730, but gives up 100mm at the long end, lacks stabilisation and silent focusing.

Sigma 150-600mm f/5-6.3 DG OS HSM C Verdict

With this lens, Sigma have created a lens that not only performs well, but that offers excellent value for money when compared to other alternatives that are available.

The performance of this lens is quite surprising, especially when compared to the more expensive 'Sports' variant, which costs around £600 more. It's this combination of decent performance and good value for money that will win this lens many fans.

Sigma 150-600mm f/5-6.3 DG OS HSM C Pros

Good sharpness throughout the zoom range
Well built
Fast focusing
Very keenly priced
Effective stabilisation
Focuses relatively close for a 600mm lens

Sigma 150-600mm f/5-6.3 DG OS HSM C Cons

Zoom creeps when pointed up or down.
No weather sealing, except for a rubber gasket on the lens mount

FEATURES	★★★★★
HANDLING	★★★★★
PERFORMANCE	★★★★★
VALUE FOR MONEY	★★★★★
VERDICT	★★★★★

