

Nikon Z8 & Z9

Custom Controls Worksheet



Z9 Control Customization Worksheet

Left Column	Value	Right Column	Value
Fn1		Fn2	
Fn3		Fn Vert	
Vert ISO Sen		AF-On	
Fn4		DISP	
Joystick (Sub-Selector Ctr)		OK	
Audio		QUAL	
WB		Playback	
Vert Joystick (Vertical multi-selector Ctr)		Vert AF-On	
Video Rec		Exposure Comp	
ISO		Cmd Dials	



This PDF is designed to help you set up your Nikon Z8 or Z9 shooting controls, located under **Custom Settings > f2 Custom Control (shooting)**.



Custom Settings > f2, default settings shown

With such an overwhelming array of options, selecting what you want to assign to each button and control is daunting, to say the least. While working on the latest edition of the [Z8 / Z9 Setup Guide](#), I added a table that included the Z8 and Z9 settings I use with my cameras. This is the first time I've used a chart this way and I was pleasantly surprised at how much smoother the setup process went! It's much easier to assign your buttons when you can look at what you've already assigned, what you have open, and what features you'd still like to add.

I wanted to share those blank tables with you so that deciding your "custom controls" strategy is at least *a little easier*. (Also, feel free to share this document with your friends.)

In addition, the next two pages include a list of customizations I think work well for wildlife and nature photographers, along some very brief notes. **If you want more info on any of the settings listed, why I use them, how I use them, or what buttons I recommend for them, see [my Z8/ Z9 setup guide](#).**

Also, note that there are more items listed than you'll have room for, so you'll have to prioritize what you want and where. Also, remember that not every button supports every option, so you may have to shuffle things around a little until you get a setup that works well for you.

Using this worksheet is simple: print everything and mark the items you want to add to your buttons. I'd also keep a blank piece of paper handy if you have options I didn't include (we all have different needs). Next, fill out the table with the items you want on each control - and remember that sometimes "none" is a perfectly acceptable answer.

Helpful Items For Wildlife Shooters	Notes
Focus Mode / AF Area Mode	Allows you to change AF modes and areas using a button other than the Focus Mode button (which is in a tricky spot when hand-holding a long lens). See Cycle AF Areas though - it's a better way to fly.
AF-On	This is usually on the AF-On button for Back Button AF.
AF Area Mode	This is an AF override and allows me to switch to a different AF area when I press the assigned button. Common overrides include 3D, single point, and Auto - I also like Custom Wide set to 1x1 so I can use subject detection with it.
AF-Area Mode + AF On	Same as above, but this changes to a different AF area AND focuses when you press the assigned button.
Switch Eyes	Allows you to switch from one eye to the other on the current subject.
Preset Focus Point	I like this on the OK button instead of Reset.
Zoom On/Off	Allows you to press a button to zoom in and out.
AF Lock Only	Good for shutter release shooters when you need to lock focus at a particular distance.
Save Focus Position	Allows you to save a preset focus position.
Recall Focus Position	Allows you to go back to a previously saved focus position.

Focus/AF Area Mode Swap	Allows you to use the rear (main) command dial to switch AF areas (instead of the sub-command dial) while pressing the focus mode button.
Sub-command Dial Zoom Role	Allows you to use the sub (front) command dial to change zoom level when you are zoomed into the image.
Recall Shooting Functions	Varies - I use it to disable subject detection, but I have instructions in the setup guide for using it as an “emergency action button” too .
Cycle AF Area Mode	Allows you to toggle through AF areas by pressing the assigned button. Each press takes you to another AF area. I love this on the Video Record button.
Cycle Live View Display	Changes the display layout on the LCD or EVF.
Exposure Delay Mode	A handier way to access Exposure Delay Mode if you use it frequently.
Exposure Compensation	I like it on the default button, but some like it on the lens control ring or Fn ring.
ISO	I like this on the default button, but also like it on the lens control ring when shooting full manual mode.
My Menu	A button press takes you instantly to My Menu .
Access Top Item In My Menu	A handy way to access a feature that’s not normally assignable to a button.
Photo Shooting Banks	Allows you to press a button and spin a command dial to swap banks.
Metering	Gives you a quick way to change metering modes.

Choose Image Area	Lets you choose between FX, DX, 1:1, or 16:9.
Switch FX/DX	Lets you toggle between FX and DX mode with a button press.
Live View Info Display Off	Clears the display so it's just the scene and the AF point.
Silent Mode	Allows you to toggle silent mode on and off.
Preview	Works like an improved version of Depth Of Field Preview.
AE Lock (hold)	Allows you to press a button and hold the current exposure.

The worksheets are on the next two pages.

Note, this document was updated on 03-20-2024 and covers the Z9 with 5.0 firmware and the Z8 with 2.0 firmware.

Z9 Control Customization Worksheet

Left Column	Value	Right Column	Value
Fn1		Fn2	
Fn3		Fn Vert	
Vert ISO Sensitivity		Focus Mode/ AF Area Mode	
Fn4		AF-On	
Joystick (Sub-Selector Ctr)		DISP	
Audio		OK	
WB		QUAL	
Vert Joystick (Vertical multi-selector Ctr)		Playback	
Video Rec		Vert AF-On	
ISO		Exposure Comp	
Flash Mode		Cmd Dials	
Lens Fn		BKT Button	
Len Fn Ring (CCW)		Lens Fn2	
Lens Mem Set		Lens Fn Ring (CW)	
Lens Control Ring			

Z8 Control Customization Worksheet

Left Column	Value	Right Column	Value
Fn1		Fn2	
Fn Vert		Focus Mode	
Fn3		AF-On	
Joystick (Sub-Selector Ctr)		DISP	
OK button		Playback	
vert multi-selector center		AF-On Vert	
Video Rec		Exp Comp	
ISO		Command dails	
BKT Button		WB Button	
Lens Fn		Lens Fn2	
Lens Fn ring ccw		Lens Fn Ring cw	
Mem Set		Lens Ctrl Ring	