

Two Cameras, No Waiting

There are two Arricam camera models: Studio (ST) and Lite (LT).

The Studio runs from 1 to 60 fps, and weighs about 18 pounds.

The Lite runs from 1 to 40 fps, and weighs about 11.5 pounds. These weights include finder; don't include magazines.

Lenses attach with the familiar PL lens mount, first introduced on the Arriflex 35BL3.

A novel enhancement is the Lens Data System, in which small contacts, similar to those seen in automatic still cameras, are located in the PL mount, and transmit data back and forth between camera and lens.

The Moviecam legacy is evident, with the Studio camera reminiscent of the Moviecam Compact and the Lite camera suggesting the Moviecam SL.

The ARRI legacy is also clearly visible: mirror shutter, drives and finders have Arriflex 535 and 435 design influence. Support, bases, matteboxes and accessories are compatible with the rest of the Arriflex system.

Second Generation

There are two generations of Arricams. Newer second generation cameras are readily identified by redesigned main displays with speed and shutter controls that can be changed with the push of your finger.



First Generation

Original Arricams work pretty much the same way as their second generation offspring. However, by now, most first generation cameras have been retrofitted with the improved main displays.

If you encounter a first generation camera, the main difference is that you'll have to use a toothpick, plastic skewer or pointed object to change frame rate and shutter angle.



Studio (1st generation)

Lite (1st generation)

When Arricams first arrived in 2001, some whining was heard about the complications of two bodies and many accessories. Some of the whining came from my own house, and it wasn't our ten-year-old. Almost every cinematographer whines about every piece of equipment that has ever been made. These complaints are eclipsed only by carping about catering quality on set or criticism of the final film by the international cartel of film critics. After the first salvo of "why didn't they," it soon became clear that designing one camera to satisfy all production permutations would have been a improbable project.

If you're working on the only show in film history where money is no object, you won't have to worry about which camera to choose—just take both. The rest of us will often have to decide which camera to bring along.

Photos in this 2nd Edition

In preparing this 2nd Edition, I have tried to update as many photos as possible to show the 2nd generation Arricams. Please forgive the places where this wasn't practical or possible.

Distinctive Features

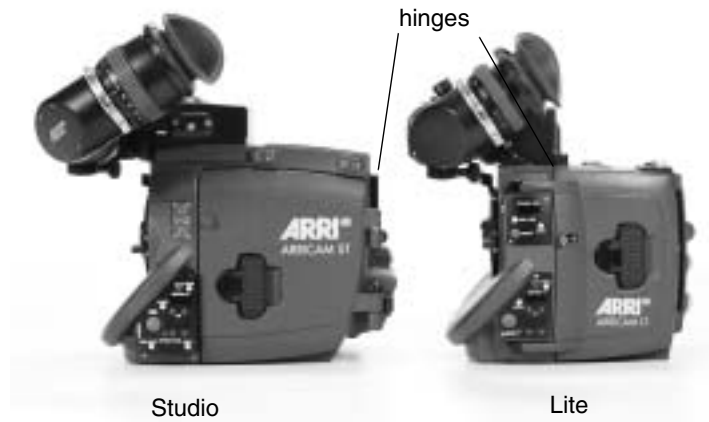
How do we quickly tell the two cameras apart?

Camera Left side

The Studio is longer and higher.

Studio door hinges are at the rear,

Lite door hinges are at the front.

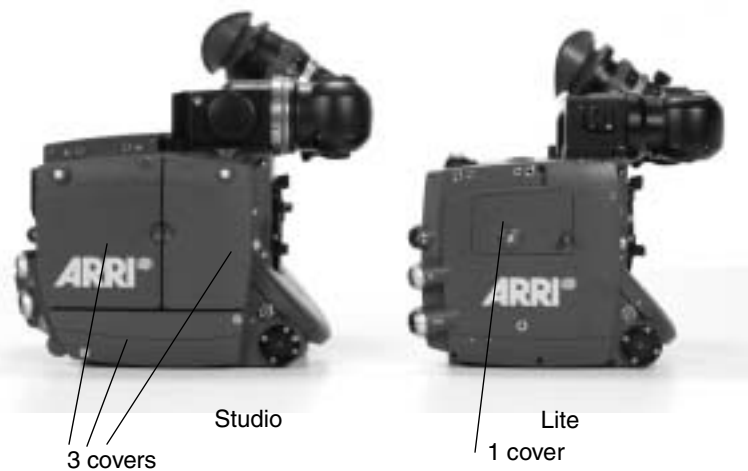


Camera Right side

The Studio has three removable covers for accessory modules.

The Speed Control Box and Lens Data Box covers are quick-release. The In-Camera Slate Box cover is removed with two 3mm hex screws.

The Lite has one removable cover for the Lens Data Box, removable with one 3mm hex screw.



Front

The Studio finder is fatter than the Lite. It's also a little brighter—by about a stop and a half.

But finders can be swapped, so the best way to tell the two cameras apart when looking at them from the front is the warning beep volume control dial located at 10 o'clock on the Studio camera.



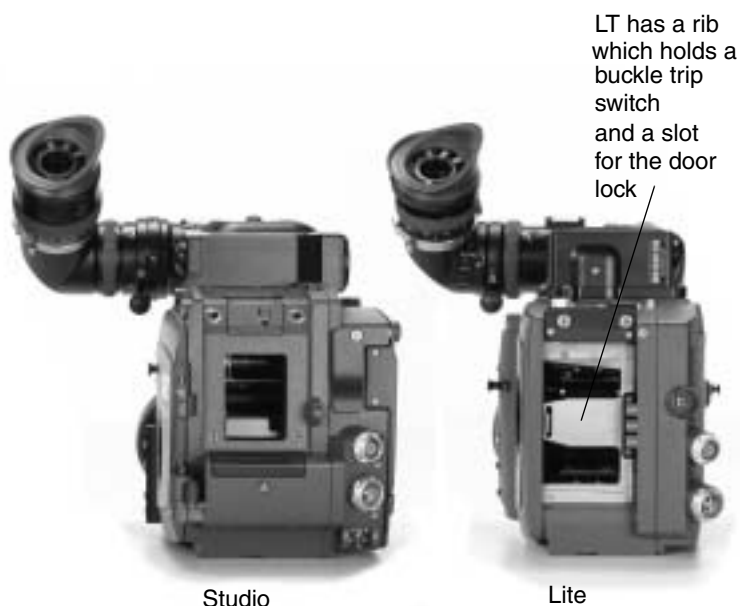
Rear

Magazines can be attached to the rear of both cameras. Only the Studio can accept magazines on top as well.

The Studio uses magazine adapters for various permutations of magazine mounting angles.

The Studio only accepts Studio magazines.

The Lite accepts Lite magazines, and Studio magazines (with an adapter, but not top-mounted).



Studio

Lite

Top without Finder

Here's a view of the cameras with the finders removed. Note how the finder mounting hardware is similar, which is good news if you want to put a Studio finder on a Lite body (highly recommended), a Lite finder on a Studio body (not as interesting), or a Lite 100% Video-only Top on a Studio (good for Steadicam).



Studio

Lite

Quick way to tell them apart: Studio has magazine opening on top, Lite doesn't.

Top with Finder

The cameras are shown with the newest versions of their respective finders—but without video assist.

New Studio Finder on Studio

New Lite Universal Finder on Lite



Top View, Finders Swapped

Here's what it looks like with the finders swapped: Original Studio Finder on Lite Body; Original Lite Finder on Studio Body.

We'll discuss this in greater detail later.

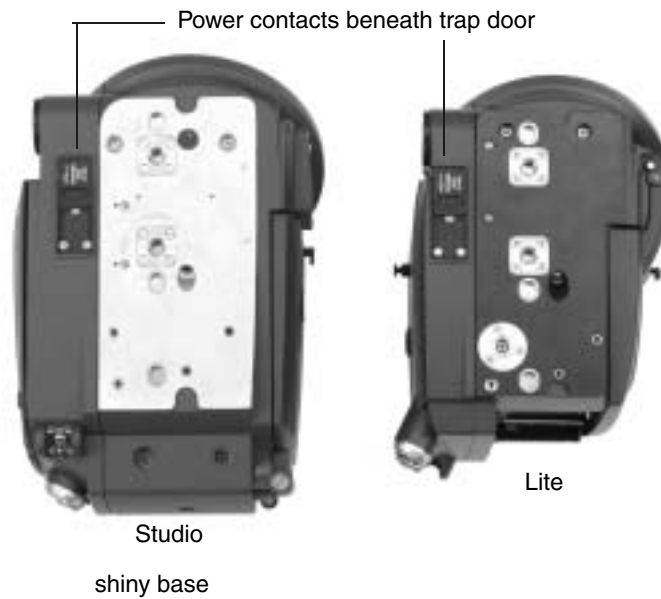


Bottom

The mounting guide holes and dual 3/8" x 16 threaded receptacles at the bottom of both cameras allow them to use the same baseplates.

A sliding trap door reveals contacts that provide power to an auxiliary 24 volt receptacle in newer sliding baseplates.

Quick way to tell the 2 apart: Studio has a shiny base; Lite's base is mostly gray.



ARRICAMS Compared

	Studio	Lite
Hinges	Door hinges at rear	Door hinges at front
Size	Longer, higher	2 accessory covers
Covers	3 accessory covers	
fps	1-60 fps fwd 1-32 fps rev	1-40 fps fwd 1-32 fps rev
Shutter	180° mirror shutter, electronically adjustable from 0°-180° in 0.1° increments. Closes fully (0°) for In-Camera Slating. For ramps, range is 11.2°-180°.	180° mirror shutter, electronically adjustable from 0°-180° in 0.1° increments. Closes fully (0°) for In-Camera Slating. For ramps, range is 11.2°-180°.
Noise level	Less than 20 db(A)	Less than 24 dB(A)
Weight	Body: 12.3 lbs/5.6 kg. Body+Finder: 17.8 lbs /8.1 kg. Body+Finder+400' Studio Mag: 25.1 lbs / 11.4 kg	Body: 8.8 lbs / 4 kg. Body+Finder: 11.7 lbs /5.3 kg. Body+Finder+400' Shoulder Mag: 17.5 lbs / 7.95 kg.
Mags	Studio 400' (122m) and Studio 1,000' (300m). Requires Mag Adapter for top, angled or rear mount. Accepts Lite mags with Lite Mag Adapter	Lite 400' (122m) Steadicam and Lite 400' shoulder. Accepts Studio mags with Mag adapter