Decisions, decisions – What lenses to buy?
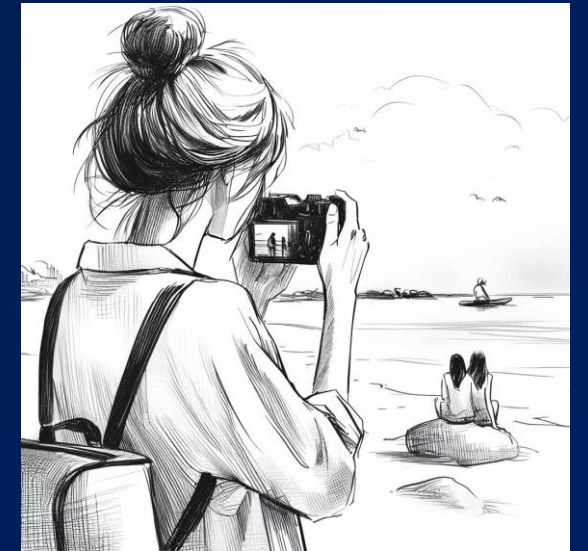
It depends:

- What kind of photos do you take?

- Where do you usually shoot?

- Do you have physical/psychological limitations?

- What is your budget?

- What lens did your camera come with?

Are you mostly a travel photographer?

- Do you fly, take bus tours, rent a car?

- Multiple lenses may be heavy/bulky for carry-on, taking on and off buses or lugging around all day if hiking.

- A multipurpose zoom of say 18 or 28mm to 200 or 400mm might be all you need for most situations. Can you leave that macro at home?

Do you mostly shoot locally?

- Do you mostly do local day/overnight photo trips where you can fill your car with all sorts of gear?

- Can you have some of your gear always in the car? e.g. old backup camera/lenses, tripod, rubber boots, etc.

Hadi Yazdi
from Unsplash

Do you enjoy capturing inside spaces?

- You might need an ultra-wide-angle lens (18mm or less)

- Would you use a fish eye?

- Will your cell phone do the trick in most situations?

Do you focus on wildlife photography?

- Will you need a super long lens for birds, eg. 600-800mm or extenders?

- Will the camera be on a tripod or will you be holding it up in the air?

- What are your budget restrictions?

Do you focus on landscape photography?

- Need a wide angle to capture entire scene

- Might want a longer lens (eg. up to 200 or 400mm) to capture distant details.

Are you willing to change lenses during an outing?

- No point bringing them if you never use them.

- Are there lenses that you still want for studio work?

What are your physical limitations?

- Heaviest part of a camera is often the lens.

- Are you willing to swap focal length for less weight?

- Do you have neck issues – cross body strap?

What are your budgetary constraints?

- Are you willing to buy second hand? If so, what are the best strategies?

- Fast or long lenses tend to be most expensive

- Currently lenses for DSLR cameras could be a bargain

- Do you enjoy collecting gear (GAS) even if they are for just in case?