

Automatic Rolleiflex (type 1)

Factory Designation: Rolleiflex Automat 6x6

Dates: August 1937 - before March 1939

Serial Numbers, below cast nameplate: 568,516 - below 805,000

Taking Lens: 75mm f/3.5 Carl Zeiss Jena Tessar

Finder Lens: Heidoscop-Anastigmat 1:2.8

Shutter: Compur-Rapid, 1 - 1/500, B

Bayonet: Size I

Dimensions: 5½ x 3½ x 3¾ inches

Weight: 32 oz

Prices: \$130 (1937), \$145 (1938)

US Distributor: Burleigh Brooks, Inc.

Identifiers: This is the only 3.5 Rolleiflex with the double bayonets on the taking lens only, no red window, and no safety catch on the shutter release. Automats can be distinguished from other Rolleiflexes by having wheels to adjust the aperture and shutter speeds. Prewar models have a grey center and ring on the faces of the wheels while postwar ones have black spots and rings.

Other Features: Cranking the lever also cocks the shutter; built-in self-timer, eye level reflex focusing via a mirror on the back of the top, parallax compensation, and fully automatic frame counting.

Remarks: Some additional features were to be added later, but this camera is essentially the same Rolleiflex which would be manufactured for 43 years. Because this is a landmark model, it is a significant one for collectors. Since it incorporates most of the features found on later models, it is also very usable. Good examples can be had for under \$100 and often much less. Because most of these cameras led a hard professional life, mint and even excellent examples are hard to come by.

Illustration of a catalog page from the collection of David Ohlson.