

# **Complete Guide** for booking digi-techs and light-techs

by **first digi**

## General introduction

The stills industry is changing rapidly. The days of “photo assistants“ are long gone where an assistant had to do light, digi, driving and everything else for 150€ per day without overtime.

The terms „Digi-Tech“ and „Light-Tech“ have developed into a profession. They are specialists in their field and we felt there is a need to inform clients and photographers about day rates and general booking terms.

To be clear: This guide is regarding professionals with years in experience and a wide spectrum of knowledge about cameras, digital- and lighting equipment, lighting techniques and a great understanding of their own skills, responsibilities and behavior on and off set as well as pre- and post-production.

Every digi-tech and light-tech started somewhere: As an intern, at university or straight to assisting. Young assistants are assistants, not professionals. With this in mind a young photo assistant can charge way less than an experienced tech. And that’s ok. Professionals as well as young assistants, both have their right to work in the industry.

It does not mean that clients and photographers have the right to exploit young assistants and push them towards crazy low day rates or even working for free.

We also want to clean up with the mindset that men are doing a better job than women in this field. Female digi-techs have the same skills than their male colleagues, maybe even more. And female light-techs are also able to carry heavy equipment, create awesome light setups and know what they’re capable of.

To help photographers, production companies, clients and agents to better understand how dayrates and overtime are calculated, we put together this guide.

Since the market is different in every country, this guide is written for the german market but we hope that it can help the industry in other parts of the world as well.

# Digi-Techs

## Day rates for digi-techs:

- Professional Digi-techs in Germany charge an average of 450€ for a 10h day.
- Depending on the size and importance of the production this can go to up to 600€ or even more per day.
- For small editorials, mini-jobs or test shoots some digi-techs can offer deals where they charge down to 350€ / day. These exceptions must be discussed individually.
- Prep days count as a full work day.
- Travel days, recce and off days get charged with 50% of dayrate.

## Overtime:

- How much overtime is charged is very different. To give photographers, clients and also digi-techs a reference, First Digi charges overtime as follows:

10h (including lunch)	->	no overtime.
11-12 h	->	10% of day rate per hour.
from 13 h	->	20% of day rate per hour.

- Counting steps: Every half hour started.
- Work time starts, with call time for the digi-tech and ends with shutting down his/her computer.
- Transportation from or to the location/studio within reasonable distance is not counted as work time.

# Digi-Techs

## Equipment:

- Professional digi-techs often use their own equipment on set. This ensures the best possible workflow and minimizes situations like connection issues, full harddrives or slow computers.
- Every digi-tech has his/her own prices for their equipment. A good reference can be the rental services and their prices in each city.
- Keep in mind that if the digi-techs equipment prices are higher than rental prices, it's mostly because they bring a lot of accesories with their equipment like clamps, extra batteries, cables etc. which are mostly not included in rental equipment.
- First Digi offers different packages from a small location setup to a full studio setup with multiple screens. These packages can be configured individually for every production adding cameras, lenses, extra screens, printers etc.. They come with a professional digi-tech and different backup storage options (1 month, 6 months, 12 months)

# Light-Techs

## Day rates for light-techs:

- Professional light-techs in Germany charge an average of 350-450€ for a 10h day.
- Depending on the size and importance of the production this can go to up to 600€ or even more per day.
- For small editorials, mini-jobs or test shoots some light-techs can offer deals where they charge down to 250€ / day. These exceptions must be discussed individually.
- Prep days count as a full work day.
- Travel days, recce and off days get charged with 50% of dayrate.

## Overtime:

- How much overtime is charged is very different. To give photographers, clients and also light-techs a reference, First Digi charges overtime as follows:

10h (including lunch)	->	no overtime.
11-12 h	->	10% of day rate per hour.
from 13 h	->	20% of day rate per hour.

- Counting steps: Every half hour started.
- Work time starts with call time for the light-tech or picking up the equipment from the rental service and ends a packed lighting truck and/ or delivering the equipment back to the rental service.
- Transportation from or to the location/studio within reasonable distance is not counted as work time.

# Summary

## Digi-Tech

Average Dayrate:	450€
Prep Day:	100% dayrate.
Recce, Travel, Offday	50% of dayrate.
Overtime:	between 10-30% of dayrate per hour.
Worktime start:	Calltime (location/studio within resonable distance).
Worktime stop:	Shutdown of computer.

## Light-Tech

Average Dayrate:	350€
Prep Day:	100% dayrate.
Recce, Travel, Offday	50% of dayrate.
Overtime:	between 10-30% of dayrate per hour.
Worktime start:	Calltime (location/studio within resonable distance) or picking up equipment from rent.
Worktime stop:	Finish packing equipment or finish delivering equipment back to rental service.

Note: We wrote this guide mainly for the german market. Other countries industries may have their own ways to calculate dayrates, overtime or equipment prices. Nevertheless we hope this guide will help our friends in other parts of the world as well. All Prices of course excl. 19% VAT.

# Thank you!

We hope we could help.

If you have any questions or suggestions about this guide we invite you to reach out to us.

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