

# Birds in flight

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# Nikon autofocus



Zolt Levay

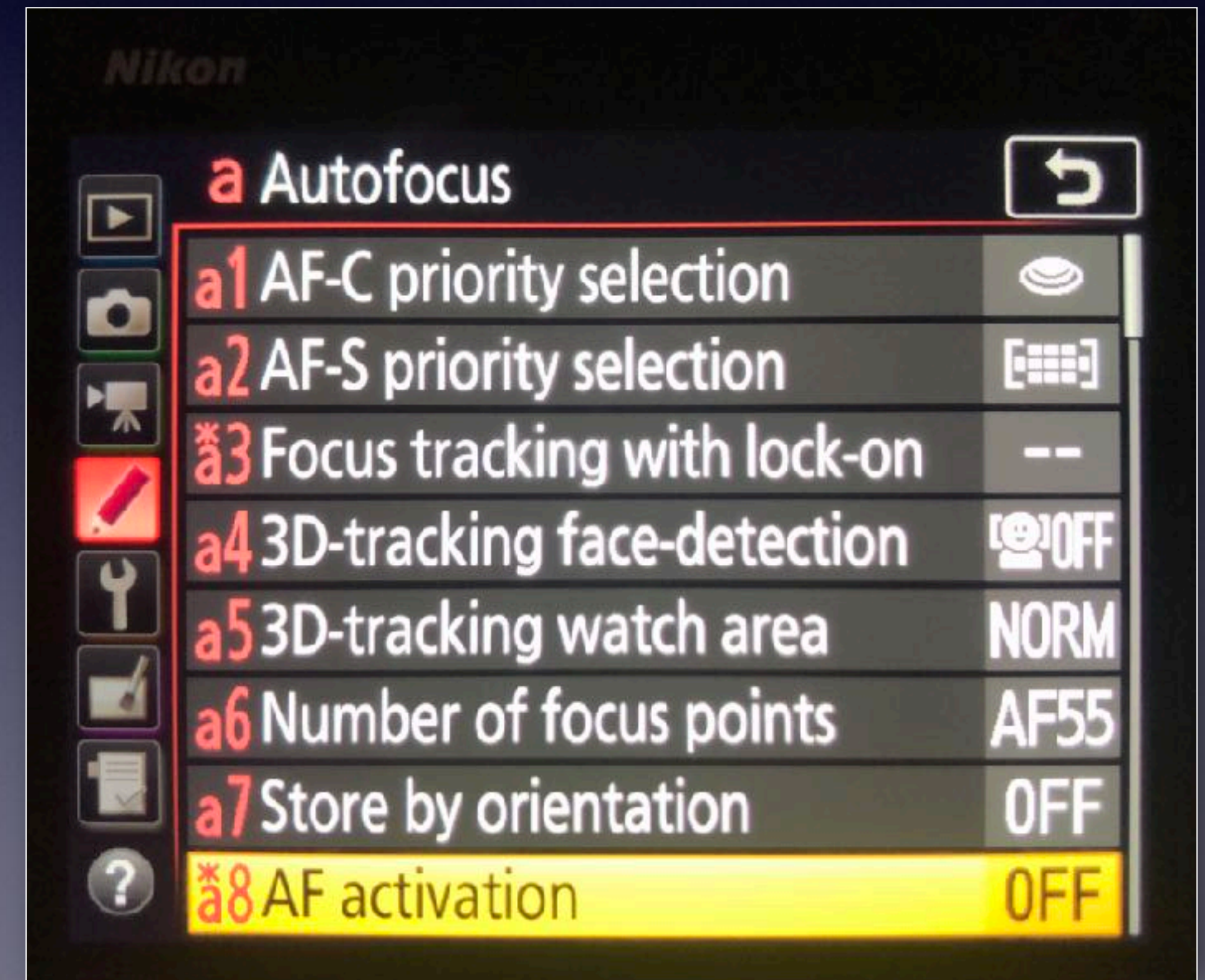
# Nikon D850 autofocus modes

- AF-S single-servo AF — fixed focus distance
- **AF-C** continuous-servo AF — focus distance changes with subject
  - **Single-point AF** — slowly moving subjects
  - **Dynamic-area AF**: 9, **25**, 72, 153 focus points — obscured or closer subjects
  - **Group-area AF** — optimal for birds in flight against simple background
  - 3D-tracking — like group-area with more focus points; slower
  - Auto-area AF — detects faces



# Back button focus

Disable focus on shutter release half depress  
Custom Setting Menu → Autofocus (a) →  
AF activation (a8) → AF-ON only (OFF)

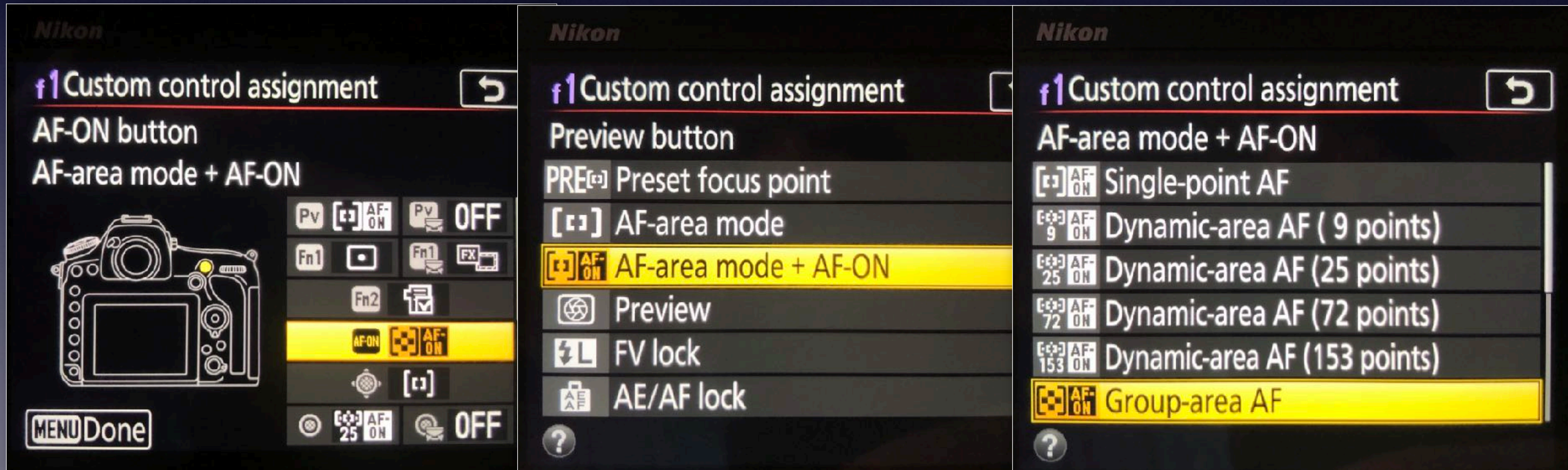


# Back button focus

Assign AF mode to AF-ON

Custom Setting Menu → Controls (f) → Custom control assignments (f1)

**AF-ON button:** AF-area mode + AF-ON → Group-area AF

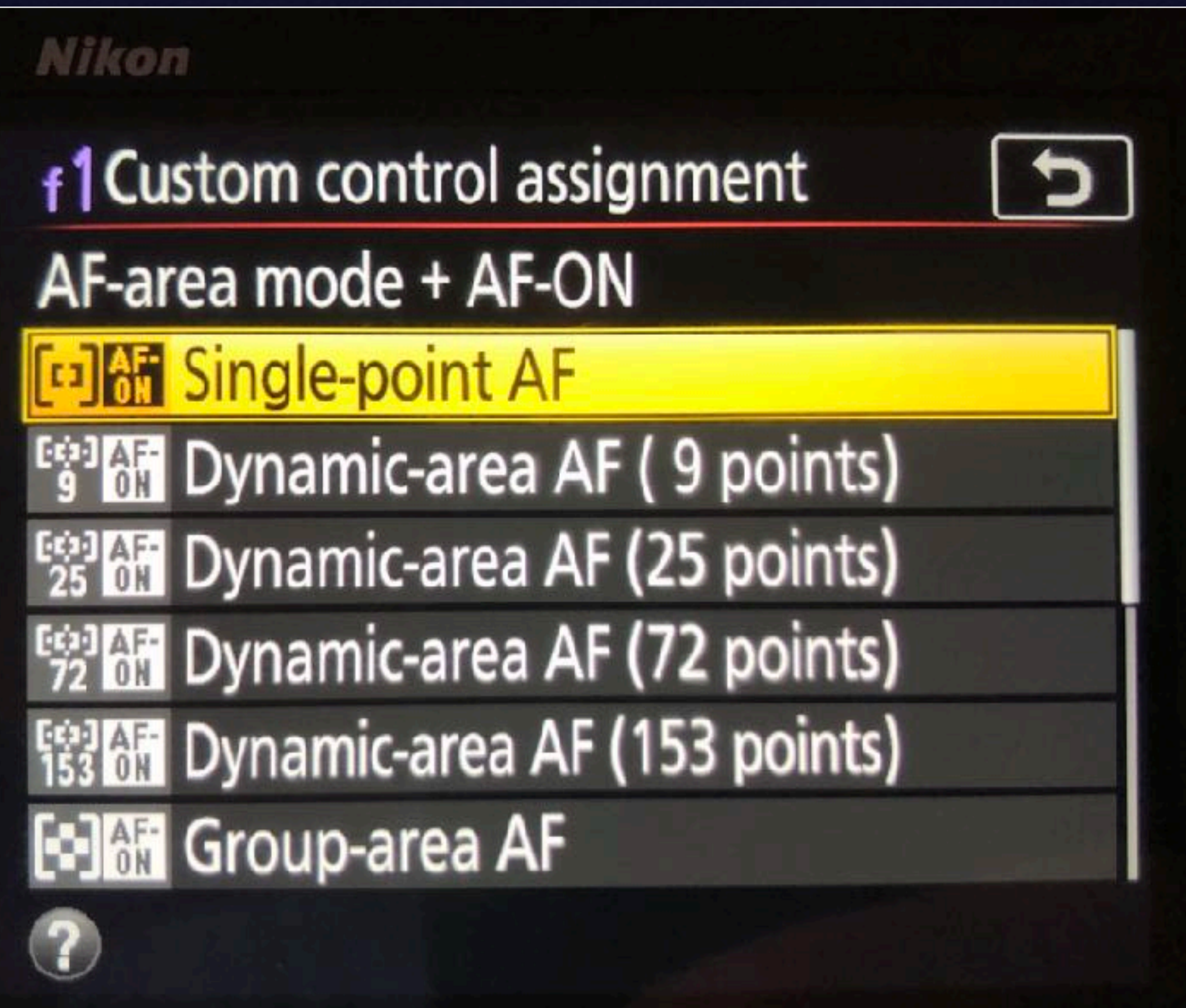


# Back button focus

Program additional buttons for alternate modes

**Pv** (preview button): AF-area mode + AF-ON → Single-point AF

**Sub-selector center**: Dynamic-area AF (25 points)



# Additional modes

- Image quality: RAW
- Exposure
  - Manual (M) exposure mode
  - Auto ISO  
Photo Shooting Menu → ISO Sensitivity Settings  
Auto ISO sensitivity control: ON
- Disable features for faster response
  - Photo Shooting Menu  
Active D-lighting, Long exposure NR, High ISO NR, Vignette control, Auto distortion control: OFF
  - Playback Menu  
Image review: OFF



# Resources

The background of the slide features three geese in flight, arranged in a descending line from top-left to bottom-right. The geese are white with dark wings and are captured in a dynamic, winged position against a soft, light blue sky.

- [Nikon D850 User Manual: Autofocus](#)
- Mark Smith video, [Nikon D850 Birds in Flight Autofocus System Setup](#)
- Nasim Mansurov, [Autofocus Modes Explained](#)
- Steve Perry video, [Birds in Flight Photography](#)