

Tripods

They can drastically change the way in which you shoot, so we've tested out the latest crop of beginner-level tripods

1 Velbon Ultra LUXi L £100

www.intro2020.co.uk

The most expensive of the tripods here, the LUXi L is a well-made, robust tripod, which is great for the serious beginner. It expands to a good height of 1.6m, while collapsing down to an extremely compact length of just 39cm. It also comes complete with a small carrying case, making it easy to transport.

The legs twist to lock, which makes extending and collapsing very quick and simple. It felt strong when used, and had no trouble handling a large DSLR camera. The LUXi L is a very competent tripod which would also suit a compact system camera. Its price may be an issue when compared with the others, but its compact size and impressive height help to justify this.

★★★★★

01

2 Manfrotto Photo-Movie Compact £50

www.manfrotto.co.uk

The Manfrotto Compact tripod bills itself as the most compact, full-size support on the market. And it's easy to see why when its folded length is just 46cm and its full height is 1.54m. However, this comes with drawbacks as the Compact uses a five-section leg structure, which is perhaps not as solid as those with three or four.

The head that comes supplied with the Compact has an ergonomic pistol-style handle, which is excellent for framing and panning shots. It also comes with an intuitive scroll-wheel locking mechanism. This is a great way of locking the position of the head while remaining in control of the camera's position.

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3 Vanguard Espod Plus 204AP £90

www.vanguardworld.co.uk

The Espod looks very professional. It extends to a respectable 1.45m using four leg sections, but it's also able to get close to the ground by using the adjustable leg positioning. Couple this with the reversible centre column, and the Espod becomes a great tripod for macro photography. It has lots of features, such as spiked feet and an anti-shock centre column, which make it an excellent choice for the keen beginner.

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04

5 Redsnapper RS-284 with RSH-24 3-way head £55

www.redsnapperuk.com

The RS-284 is a four-section, aluminium, full-size tripod, which is extendable up to 1.52m. It comes with all of the common features, such as a reversible centre column for getting lower to the ground, as well as a spring-loaded hook to hang a weight on for extra stability.

The four sections are extended using a twist-lock mechanism, and there are spiked feet for varying shooting surfaces. The legs were the widest of the group, which gave us confidence no matter what camera we placed on it.

It comes supplied with an excellent padded carrying case, which has an extremely comfortable shoulder strap. This made carrying the largest tripod of the group very easy.

The Redsnapper is a very good tripod, which shone as a professional-grade piece of equipment for an extremely good price.

★★★★★



4 Vanguard Nivelu 204SL £60

www.vanguardworld.co.uk

The Vanguard Nivelu is far and away the smallest tripod on test here. It folds down to a height of 30cm, and extends to a maximum height of 101cm. It is designed specifically for compact system cameras, and its size certainly complements this.

Although this tripod is small and unassuming, it comes packed with all the features you would expect on a much larger, more professional tripod. The bubble spirit level, reversible centre column and anti-shock rubber ring give most users everything they'll need. It also uses a twist lock mechanism for the four-section legs to make extending the tripod a quick and easy process. Although the 204SL will not suit larger cameras, it is the perfect companion for any compact or smaller interchangeable lens cameras.

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