



12  
of the  
best

# Buyers' Guide... Tripods

A tripod is an essential photographic accessory and our Buyers' Guide will help you choose the right one for your photography and budget

**A** TRIPOD is an essential piece of photographic kit. We might moan about carrying them, gripe about them slowing us down and 'hampering creativity', but if you want noiseless (or grainless), blur-free images with near front-to-back depth of field, then you need a tripod – especially if you shoot during winter or in low light.

In-camera and lens-based image-stabilisation systems are very useful,

but they are no substitute for a good solid tripod. The right tripod puts the photographer completely in charge of exposure, with no need to compromise on the aperture or sensitivity setting to allow 'safe' shutter speeds.

Obviously, budget is a major consideration when selecting a tripod, but it's important to factor in the number of photographic opportunities that a good tripod opens up to you.

For example, if you want to capture

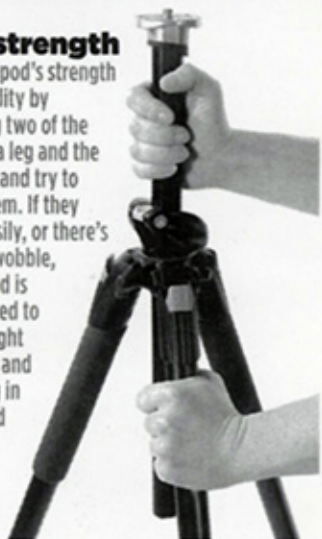
the Cumbrian hills in their winter splendour, you need a tripod that will stand up to the strong winds that can affect the area. If you are fit and strong, or you intend to drive to most locations, you can opt for a heavy tripod for maximum stability. However, if you want to save on weight, take a look at the range of carbon-fibre tripods that are available. These are more expensive, but are also considerably lighter and almost as stable as their aluminium counterparts. If you predominantly shoot indoors and need a tripod to ensure perfect macro or still-life shots, then portability is less of a concern and a heavy, solid tripod is perfect. Equally, if you want a tripod to take abroad on holiday, then a small, light tripod could be the order of the day.

It's important to factor in the number of photographic opportunities that a good tripod opens up to you

## What to look for...

### Leg strength

Test a tripod's strength and rigidity by grasping two of the legs, or a leg and the column, and try to twist them. If they bend easily, or there's a lot of wobble, the tripod is best suited to lightweight cameras and shooting in sheltered areas



### Leg locks

Clip locks are the quickest and easiest to use, but check if their resistance can be adjusted to cater for loosening over time. Bulky leg locks can make storing a tripod in a bag problematic



### Low shooting angle

Some tripods have a centre column that can be reversed, split or tilted to make it easy to shoot from low angles. It's essential for some macro work and useful for adding interest to landscape images



### Stability aids

Some tripods have a hook at the base of the centre column or on their leg collar that makes it easy to suspend a bag to give extra weight and stability. A column hook is useful for adding a counterweight





- Lightweight
- Geared centre column
- Integral three-way head



## Velbon CX-440 £39.99

For more information visit [www.intro2020.co.uk](http://www.intro2020.co.uk) or call 01628 674 411

THERE are times when all you want is a lightweight tripod to carry with you in case you need to support a compact camera or a small SLR. While the Velbon CX-440 won't stand up to hurricane-strength winds and isn't ideally suited for use with long, heavy optics, it is one of the lightest and most affordable tripods in this guide and is fine for smaller cameras and sheltered conditions.

Conveniently, the CX-440 is supplied with a three-way head complete with a quick-release plate. Like the rest of the head, this plate is made from plastic, and although the metal fixing bolt has a plastic knurled rim there is a slot to enable it to be tightened securely.

This is the only tripod in our guide to feature a geared centre column. It isn't as quick to adjust from one end to the other as an ungeared column, but it allows the camera's height to be set easily with a

reasonable level of precision.

When the centre column is fully extended, the CX-440 has a maximum height of 144cm. This is a couple of centimetres higher than the Manfrotto M-Y 7321YB (see page 41). However, having three-section legs rather than the four-section versions of the Manfrotto tripod means that the Velbon support cannot pack down quite as neatly, but it's still a good choice for travel. As the minimum shooting height is 51cm, rather than the 45cm on the 7321YB, the Velbon CX-440 may not be the best option if you like to shoot from low angles on a regular basis.

### Summary

A budget tripod suitable for small SLRs and compact cameras. Free with an AP subscription (visit [www.amateurphotographer.co.uk](http://www.amateurphotographer.co.uk))

<b>Material</b>	Aluminium legs; plastic centre column, collar and leg-locks
<b>Attachment (top)</b>	Fixed three-way head with quick-release plate
<b>Closed length</b>	54cm (including head)
<b>Leg angles</b>	One option, angle unspecified
<b>Leg sections</b>	Three
<b>Load capacity</b>	2kg
<b>Maximum height</b>	144cm
<b>Minimum height</b>	51cm including head
<b>Bubble spirit level</b>	No
<b>Weight</b>	1.1kg

- Aluminium legs
- Interchangeable ball-head
- Monopod centre column



## Hähnel Triad 100 £79.99

For more information visit [www.hahnel.ie](http://www.hahnel.ie) or call 00 353 23 8841606

THE Triad 100 is the larger of the two tripods in Hähnel's range. Having aluminium legs means it isn't the lightest tripod in this guide, but it still weighs only 2.6kg with the supplied ball head. Although it has a maximum load capacity of 5kg, the lower legs are quite slim and it isn't the ideal tripod to use at full height in a strong wind. However, the Triad 100 makes a good budget option for the cash-conscious landscape photographer. The metal fixings should ensure it provides long service and the head has a built-in spirit-level to make sure horizons are always at the correct angle.

We found that the leg locks were rather stiff, but thankfully this can be adjusted with the use of a screwdriver. Also, though the leg angle is easy to adjust, it isn't immediately obvious that there are three options available.

Conveniently, the Triad 100's centre column can be removed easily from

the tripod for use as a four-section monopod. Oddly, though, only the bottom section of the telescopic column locks, so it collapses if leant on too heavily. However, it is an unusually versatile monopod as the supplied ball-head enables images to be shot in both the upright and horizontal formats.

The metal ball-head is well made, and though the small wings on the bolt of the quick-release plate make it hard to tighten satisfactorily, the plate's rubberised coating provides a good grip. This means that even larger cameras, such as a Nikon D300 with a 70-200mm f/2.8 lens, won't slip in portrait format.

### Summary

The complete solution – a tripod, monopod and ball-head at a reasonable price that will suit photographers on a budget

<b>Material</b>	Aluminium legs; metal leg-locks
<b>Attachment (top)</b>	3/8in screw attachment, supplied with three-way head
<b>Closed length</b>	62cm
<b>Leg angles</b>	Three options, angles unspecified
<b>Leg sections</b>	Three
<b>Load capacity</b>	5kg
<b>Maximum height</b>	153cm with supplied head (143cm without)
<b>Minimum height</b>	53.5cm including head (approx 43cm without)
<b>Bubble spirit level</b>	Yes (circular level on head)
<b>Weight</b>	2.614kg



- Aluminium legs
- Variable centre column
- Sprung hook on column



## Giottos MTL 9351B £90

For more information visit [www.daymen.co.uk](http://www.daymen.co.uk) or call 0870 066 9285

GIOTTOS is a name that is growing in stature in the UK tripod market, and the MTL 9351B offers very high build quality at a keen price. The MTL 9351B is the smallest of the two Giottos aluminium-legged, MTL, adjustable-column tripods. Like the carbon-fibre Giottos MTL 8350B (see page 43), a key selling point of this tripod is the fact that the column can be moved through 180°. This means the column can be flipped upside down using a sturdy hinge joint on the collar. The joint can also be locked at any angle between the two extremes, so the tripod is ideal for low-level photography and even allows the camera to be positioned directly above a subject. The column adjustment is fast and easy, and the three-section legs have tension-adjustable, quick-release locks, so you don't waste much time setting up the tripod when a new scene presents itself.

At 2.1kg, the MTL 9351B weighs less

than the Manfrotto 055XPROB (see page 42), and although it lacks some of the rigidity of the more expensive tripod it is still sturdy. In addition, the hook at the base of the Giottos MTL 9351B's centre column makes it easy to hang extra weight, such as a camera bag, to increase stability.

Having just three leg sections means the MTL 9351B isn't the smallest tripod when folded down (at 64cm), but with the centre column fully extended it has a maximum height of 156cm. This, combined with the adjustable column, means the MTL 9351B is a versatile tripod that allows you to position your camera just where you need it.

### Summary

A solidly built, versatile tripod that is suited for use in the studio or out in the field and is excellent value for money

Material	Aluminium legs
Attachment (top)	3/8in screw type
Closed length	64cm
Leg angles	Three options, angles unspecified
Leg sections	Three
Load capacity	5kg
Maximum height	156cm
Minimum height	26cm (lower shooting height possible)
Bubble spirit level	Yes (circular level on collar)
Weight	2.1kg

- Compact and lightweight
- Integral three-way head
- Stable mini tripod



BEST FOR  
Packing  
in a  
suitcase

## Manfrotto M-Y 7321YB £94.95

For more information visit [www.bogenimaging.co.uk](http://www.bogenimaging.co.uk) or call 01293 583 300

WHEN you're heading off on holiday you need a small, light tripod to slip in your suitcase, and the Manfrotto M-Y Mini 3W 7321YB certainly fits the bill. Although it extends to 142cm with the centre column fully extended, its four-section legs enable it to be packed down to a tiny 49cm.

It isn't designed for use with a heavy DSLR and long telephoto lens combination, but it can support up to 2.5kg in weight so it will do as a stand-in – though we wouldn't recommend leaving it unattended. It is, however, perfect for stabilising a small SLR or compact camera to help you get that night-time shot of your favourite taverna. If just the upper, broader tripod legs are extended, the 7321YB is remarkably stable. And, at just 1.27kg, it won't send your luggage over the airline weight maximum.

The 7321YB comes complete with a three-way tripod head that features a small, plastic, quick-release plate. As

the fixing bolt is recessed, the plate can only be attached to a camera with the use of a chunky screwdriver or a coin in the broad slot. Video photographers will appreciate the removable retaining pin adjacent to the fixing bolt. The tilt lock, which fixes the camera in the upright or horizontal position (or anywhere in between), has a comparatively small locking nut, but there is a longer panning bar that makes following a subject's movement with the camera easy and comfortable.

The leg-locks have quick-release clips, and although the tension cannot be adjusted we found that they click nicely into place.

### Summary

A lightweight and compact tripod that is perfect for holidays to take the blur out of low-light shots

Material	Aluminium legs; plastic leg-locks
Attachment (top)	Fixed three-way head with quick-release plate
Closed length	49cm
Leg angles	Two options, angles unspecified
Leg sections	Four
Load capacity	2.5kg
Maximum height	142cm
Minimum height	45cm including head
Bubble spirit level	No
Weight	1.27kg



- Aluminium construction
- Independent leg movements
- Centre column swings through 180°



## Benbo Trekker Mk 3 £97.06

For more information visit [www.patersonphotographic.com](http://www.patersonphotographic.com) or call 0121 520 4830

BENBO tripods are a favourite with many still-life and macro photography lovers because of their amazing adjustability. However, some people say that using one is like wrestling with a set of bagpipes. What sets Benbo (and Uni-Loc) tripods apart from most others is their main joint, which links the legs and centre column. Loosening this joint allows the legs to be independently positioned and the column to be rotated through 180°, which means the tripod is extremely useful on uneven ground or when the subject is in an awkward position.

Getting the tripod and camera balanced, however, takes a bit of practice. Fortunately, the Trekker Mk 3, which is the most popular of Benbo's five tripods, has a hook at the end of the column that can be used for hanging a counterweight.

Though it is relatively light at 2kg, the aluminium construction of the

Trekker Mk 3 means it is very rigid and, provided it is well balanced, it is very sturdy. Unfortunately, though, its legs have only two sections, so even when fully collapsed it measures 79cm – and that makes it unwieldy to carry over long distances.

The large lever on the main joint bolt makes it easy to loosen and tighten quickly, and the rather bulbous screw-fix leg-locks work smoothly. Given the variable camera positioning made possible by the Trekker Mk 3, it is most suited for use with a ball-head, but the tripod can be set up in a more conventional arrangement and used with a three-way head.

### Summary

The Benbo Trekker Mk 3 takes a little getting used to, but it's an incredibly versatile and adjustable tripod

Material	Aluminium construction
Attachment (top)	1/4in screw type
Closed length	79cm
Leg angles	Infinitely variable
Leg sections	Two
Load capacity	8kg
Maximum height	150cm
Minimum height	Ground level
Bubble spirit level	No
Weight	2kg

- Aluminium legs
- Quick-release leg-locks
- Centre column swings through 90°



**BEST FOR**  
Enthusiasts  
who want a  
'workhorse'

## Manfrotto 055XPROB £149.95

For more information visit [www.bogenimaging.co.uk](http://www.bogenimaging.co.uk) or call 01293 583 300

MANFROTTO'S 055 series is one of the most popular tripod ranges with enthusiast photographers. It's easy to see why, as the 055XPROB is the second most robust conventional tripod in this guide, beaten only by the considerably more expensive Gitzo GT3541LS (see page 45). However, the three-section legs are constructed from aluminium, rather than carbon fibre, so it weighs a fairly hefty 2.4kg. This is 0.7kg more than the Gitzo model.

Conveniently, two of the legs have foam coverings to make them more comfortable to handhold in cold weather, and to ease the burden when the tripod is hoisted onto a shoulder.

Enthusiasts with an older 055 series tripod who like shooting from low levels should consider updating to the 055XPROB, as it features the Q90° centre column that can be moved through 90° into the horizontal position. This is achieved by extending

the column to its highest position and swivelling it in the collar joint. There's no need to disassemble the column or remove it from the tripod. Consequently, it's easy to use the 055XPROB to support a camera near ground level. This is especially attractive with Live View-enabled cameras.

As the legs have quick-release clips, leg-length adjustments are straightforward. In addition, each of the legs can be splayed and locked in a choice of four angles: 23°, 45°, 65° and 88°. As a result, it is very easy and quick to switch from shooting from the 055XPROB's maximum height of 178.5cm to its minimum of 10cm.

### Summary

A versatile tripod that is a little heavy in comparison with its carbon-fibre competition, but offers excellent stability

Material	Aluminium legs
Attachment (top)	3/8in screw type
Closed length	65.5cm
Leg angles	23°, 45°, 65°, 88°
Leg sections	Three
Load capacity	7kg
Maximum height	178.5cm
Minimum height	10cm (lower shooting heights possible)
Bubble spirit level	Yes (on head plate)
Weight	2.4kg



- Heavyweight model
- Independent leg movements
- Centre column swings through 180°



## Uni-Loc Major System 1600 £178

For more information visit [www.uniloctripod.com](http://www.uniloctripod.com) or call 01525 372 030

LIKE the Benbo tripods, the Uni-Loc tripods use a single curved bolt with a large locking lever at the main joint, and this allows the legs and column to be moved independently. The column may be completely inverted.

As part of the Uni-Loc System range, the Major System 1600 is a modular tripod and it is possible to use the supplied Allen key to remove the legs and/or three-section centre column to attach alternatives. Optional short legs (£17.50) create a table-top tripod, while a table clamp (£21.89) is useful for macro workers. In addition, two monopod configurations (a long folding type and a shorter, fixed version) can be created from the legs and centre column.

Unusually, the centre column has a lockable joint towards one end to allow it to be bent through 180°. It also has a head platform at either end, one with two 1/4in screws and the other with a 3/8in screw. As they

are attached with hex socket head bolts, the head plates can be swapped if necessary.

The Major System 1600 is a large, heavy-duty tripod with a weight to match, so it isn't a model that you want to carry for long distances. However, it is the sturdiest tripod in this guide and the sealed leg tubes are suitable for submerging in water (or mud) up to the leg-locks. Helpfully, the nylon feet have spikes that provide grip on hard surfaces or soft, slippery mud. Subsequently, the Major System 1600 is the ideal choice for wildlife, nature, still-life and macro photographers who need a highly adjustable, robust and stable tripod.

### Summary

**A highly adjustable tripod which, with the right head, can support very large camera and lens combinations**

<b>Material</b>	Aluminium legs; nylon mouldings
<b>Attachment (top)</b>	1/4 and 3/8in screw attachments
<b>Closed length</b>	83cm
<b>Leg angles</b>	Infinitely variable
<b>Leg sections</b>	Two
<b>Load capacity</b>	10kg
<b>Maximum height</b>	180cm
<b>Minimum height</b>	Ground level
<b>Bubble spirit level</b>	No
<b>Weight</b>	3.8kg

- Carbon-fibre legs
- Variangle centre column
- Sprung hook on column



**BEST FOR**  
Low-angle  
landscapes

## Giottos MTL 8350B £200

For more information visit [www.daymen.co.uk](http://www.daymen.co.uk) or call 0870 066 9285

DIE-CAST aluminium fixings and carbon-fibre legs combine to make the Giottos MTL 8350B a lightweight yet very stable tripod that is well suited for use by keen walkers and landscape photographers. The three-section legs have quick-release locks for speedy deployment and packing away, and they can be set to one of three angles.

Low-level photography lovers will really appreciate the adjustable centre column that can be swung through 180°. However, when the column is in this orientation the camera is upside down. The variable angle of the Giottos centre column makes it even more versatile than the Manfrotto design, and it is especially useful for macro or still-life photography. As with the Manfrotto tripods, photographers need to take a little extra care to ensure the tripod is correctly balanced when the centre column is out of the vertical position.

Fortunately, there is a sprung hook at the base of the centre column for adding extra stabilisation and counterbalancing the weight of a camera when the column is positioned at an unusual angle.

As with the aluminium-legged Giottos MTL 9351B (see page 41), there is a small, circular spirit-level built into the 8350B's collar. This is intended to ensure that the legs are level, and is especially useful for photographers who wish to pan or shoot a series of images for a panorama. Most photographers, however, will find a spirit level in a tripod head more useful as this indicates the camera's angle.

### Summary

**An excellent all-round, lightweight tripod that makes it easy to shoot from a range of angles with good stability**

<b>Material</b>	Carbon-fibre legs; aluminium fixings
<b>Attachment (top)</b>	3/8in screw type
<b>Closed length</b>	53cm
<b>Leg angles</b>	Three, angles not specified
<b>Leg sections</b>	Four
<b>Load capacity</b>	5kg
<b>Maximum height</b>	146cm
<b>Minimum height</b>	21cm (lower shooting heights possible)
<b>Bubble spirit level</b>	Yes (on head plate)
<b>Weight</b>	1.6kg



- Carbon-fibre legs
- Folds down to 42.3cm
- Very light, yet stable



## Velbon Sherpa Pro CF-435 £200

For more information visit [www.intro2020.com](http://www.intro2020.com) or call 01628 674 411

ALTHOUGH it only has a maximum height of 136.3cm, the Velbon Sherpa Pro CF-435 is incredibly light at just over 1kg. It also folds down to 42.3cm, which makes it very attractive for anyone who needs to carry a tripod for long distances. While the lightness of this tripod is due, in part, to its comparatively small size, it can largely be attributed to its carbon-fibre leg and plastic leg-lock construction.

Though the tension-adjustable leg-locks feel fairly solid, they may not last quite as long as the metal ones found on some of the other tripods in this guide.

Despite its low mass and relatively small size, the Velbon Sherpa Pro CF-435 is incredibly stable and it stood up to our bending and twisting as well as the aluminium-legged Manfrotto 055XPROB (see page 42). It should withstand a strong wind with ease and makes an excellent choice for keen landscape photographers.

Adjustable feet enable the CF-435 to rest on rubber pads when used on hard surfaces or on spikes to prevent slippage on grass or mud. Like most of the larger tripods in this guide, the three-section legs have foam grips and can be set to three angles. The centre column may also be split to allow it to be inverted or the legs to be splayed to their widest angle at their shortest length, which enables the tripod to have a minimum height of just 13.3cm.

With a maximum load of 2.5kg, the Velbon Sherpa Pro CF-435 is strong enough to support a large camera such as a Nikon D300 with a 70-200mm f/2.8 lens mounted.

### Summary

A small, very light tripod that packs down to a tiny 42.3cm, making it ideal for carrying in or on a rucksack

Material	Carbon-fibre legs; aluminium alloy collar; plastic leg-locks
Attachment (top)	1/4in screw type
Closed length	42.3cm
Leg angles	Three, angles not specified
Leg sections	Three
Load capacity	2.5kg
Maximum height	136.3cm
Minimum height	13.3cm
Bubble spirit level	No
Weight	1.02kg

- Three-way head included
- Aluminium-magnesium-titanium construction
- Two-part centre column



## Slik Pro 780DX £259

For more information visit [www.intro2020.com](http://www.intro2020.com) or call 01628 674 411

SLIK uses an aluminium-magnesium-titanium composite to make the legs of the Pro 780DX, which gives it a 40% greater strength-to-weight ratio than if using aluminium alone. Though undoubtedly very strong (this is one of the most rigid and stable tripods in this guide), the Pro 780DX (legs only) weighs about the same as the second strongest, the Manfrotto 055XPROB (see page 42). This weight and strength mean the tripod can support large cameras with long lenses mounted even in challenging weather. However, as it is one of the largest tripods when folded, it may be more attractive for use in the home for still-life and macro photography. Alternatively, it is good for relatively local landscape work that can be reached by car rather than yomping across hills for long distances.

Foam covers over the three-section legs make the tripod comfortable to carry in the hand even in very cold

weather, and soften the edges when the weight is transferred to a shoulder. The legs can be adjusted between three angles, and the quick-release locks (with adjustable tension) are robust and easy to use. Conveniently, the centre column splits in two to allow for low-level shooting with the legs splayed to their widest angle or the head inverted. A nut above the leg collar loosens or tightens on the gearless centre column to allow it to be positioned as required.

The predominantly metal SH-807E three-way head isn't especially pretty, but it is solidly built and capable of supporting professional-level cameras with ease.

### Summary

A sturdy, reliable tripod that is ideal for use in the studio or for those who tend to drive to most landscape locations

Material	Aluminium-magnesium-titanium composite
Attachment (top)	3/8in screw-type with interchangeable three-way head supplied
Closed length	82.3cm
Leg angles	Three, angles not specified
Leg sections	Three
Load capacity	6.8kg
Maximum height	195cm
Minimum height	41.3cm with head (around 28cm without)
Bubble spirit level	Yes (on supplied head)
Weight	3.152kg with supplied head (around 2.4kg without)



- Carbon-fibre leg tubes
- Centre column swings to 90°
- Magnesium castings



## Manfrotto 190CXPRO4 £279.95

For more information visit [www.bogenimaging.co.uk](http://www.bogenimaging.co.uk) or call 01293 583 300

THE 190CXPRO4 sits at the top of Manfrotto's new CX series of carbon-fibre tripods, and it is aimed at professional and serious enthusiast photographers.

A small, circular bubble level is set into the tripod's top-plate to ensure the legs are level, and each of the four-section legs can be set to one of four angles (25°, 46°, 66° and 89°). Like the 055XPROB (see page 42), the 190CXPRO4 features the Q90° quick rotation centre column that can be swiftly switched from the vertical to the horizontal position. As a result, it is possible to shoot from almost ground level (8cm), which is something that may be attractive to owners of cameras with variable LCD screens. The Q90° column also makes it possible to shoot from directly above a subject, which is useful for copying prints and so on.

Thanks to its legs having four sections, the 190CXPRO4 packs down to an impressively small size of

just 50cm (without a head), yet it has a maximum height of 146cm (122cm with the centre column down). In addition, the use of carbon fibre for the legs and magnesium alloy for the fixings means the tripod has an outstandingly low weight of 1.34kg (without a head).

Despite its lightweight construction, this tripod is remarkably strong and we could only make it flex a little more than its aluminium companion, the 055XPROB. Consequently, the 190CXPRO4 is an excellent choice for landscape photographers who like to travel on foot to far-flung locations. Though it is equally at home in the studio, the heavier, less expensive 055XPROB may be a better choice.

### Summary

**Small pack size and low weight make this an excellent choice for landscape photographers who like to walk to locations**

Material	Carbon-fibre tubing; magnesium castings
Attachment (top)	3/8in screw-type
Closed length	50cm
Leg angles	Four: 25°, 46°, 66°, 89°
Leg sections	Four
Load capacity	5kg
Maximum height	146cm (122cm with centre column down)
Minimum height	8cm
Bubble spirit level	Yes (on head plate)
Weight	1.34kg

- Carbon-fibre legs
- Very stable
- Modular design



## Gitzo GT3541LS £549.95

For more information visit [www.bogenimaging.co.uk](http://www.bogenimaging.co.uk) or call 01293 583 300

WITH its hammered-finish metal castings and matt-surfaced legs, the Gitzo GT3541LS is a beautiful, high-quality, high-cost camera support. Though it looks chunky, especially at the collar, its carbon-fibre leg construction keeps the weight down to just 1.7kg. In fact, everyone who picked it up in our office expressed surprise at its low mass.

The GT3541LS's four-section legs have low-profile twist locks that make it easy to slip the tripod in and out of a bag or rucksack fixing, but they take a little getting used to. Most novice users spend a few minutes rotating the lock the wrong way or loosen a lock and pull on the wrong section.

As part of Gitzo's modular Systematic range, the GT3541LS has a number of centre-column options, but the expensive £549.95 version seen here is column-less. While this is useful for shooting from low angles, it makes adjusting the camera to exactly

the right height a little awkward.

Well-heeled photographers may wish to invest in the GS3511S carbon-fibre centre column (£169.95) for the extra convenience it brings.

Though the Gitzo GT3541LS has remarkably low weight, it is the strongest, sturdiest conventional tripod in this guide and we were only able to twist it with considerable side force on the legs. This combination of strength and light weight makes the tripod ideal for use by serious landscape photographers who are willing to walk for miles with large cameras to reach their chosen scene. However, as the collar is bulky, the tripod takes up quite a bit of space in a suitcase or holdall.

### Summary

**A surprisingly lightweight yet sturdy and robust tripod with a very high price tag and no centre column**

Material	Carbon-fibre
Attachment (top)	3/8in screw-type
Closed length	55cm
Leg angles	Three, angles not specified
Leg sections	Four
Load capacity	18kg
Maximum height	146cm
Minimum height	10cm
Bubble spirit level	Yes (on head plate)
Weight	1.7kg