

# BACKPACKS

*Lugging a large load has never been more convenient*



[www.manfrotto.co.uk](http://www.manfrotto.co.uk)

## Manfrotto Pro Light 3N1-36

£170/\$190



[www.mindshiftgear.com](http://www.mindshiftgear.com)

## MindShift Gear rotation180° Professional Deluxe

£400/\$500



[www.peakdesign.com](http://www.peakdesign.com)

## Peak Design Everyday Backpack 20L

£230/\$260

1

**THIS** versatile pack is designed for a DSLR kit, video set-up, or a small drone. In DSLR mode the lower two thirds of the bag will house a body with attached lens, surrounded by up to five extra lenses. Flaps on either side let you easily access your camera on the go, but the main front panel can slightly restrict access to lenses stored at the top of this compartment, and it likes to spring closed on occasion.

You can solve this by opening the entire front of the bag, but zips, clips and Velcro need to be negotiated. Now the upper third of the bag is revealed, normally accessed by peeling back only the upper portion of the front panel. Here you'll find a large space for more camera gear or personal effects.

Comfort is acceptable, but the shoulder straps feel a bit cheap and aren't the widest. They can turn the bag into a sling, however, and will tuck behind the back panel when you need them out of the way. We also like the simple, secure tripod attachment.

VERDICT



2

**MINDSHIFT'S** entry is almost a full-on hiking backpack, with a rigid frame and a go-anywhere exterior. It's blessed with some comfortable straps, back padding and decent hip pads. These attach to a removable lower compartment that can slide sideways out of the backpack and rotate on the hip belt to face you. Here you can store essential gear as large as an ungripped DSLR with a 70-200mm lens, plus a couple of small lenses alongside. It's a well-designed way to keep core kit accessible on the go, and offers unmatched convenience.

Back in the main bag, there's a removable padded insert accessible via the top, or through a hinged rear panel. It'll house a pro DSLR and attached 70-200mm, but it's relatively narrow. Thankfully, large side pockets and a neat tripod mount point help increase storage.

The daunting price can be reduced by bagging the non-Deluxe version, but then you don't get the removable insert.

VERDICT



3

**IT'S** hard not to like this bag's chic style, tactile materials and beautifully crafted hardware. At 46 x 30 x 17cm, it's compact, but can still transport an ungripped DSLR with up to five lenses. There's no front or rear opening, but rather large side flaps that afford very good mobile access.

Inside are internal dividers that form shelves attached to the front and back. They use a clever design that can snap into thirds to allow a long lens to pass down one side, or can be instantly segmented, so multiple small lenses can share one shelf.

Up top is a large multi-use area that can expand by up to eight litres, thanks to a top flap with four latching positions. A travel tripod will stow on the side, there's space for a 13-inch laptop and tablet in the back, and you can even lash a small drone onto the front if you're planning an aerial shoot.

A basic waist belt helps support heavier loads, and although it lacks hip pads, it can be completely trucked away when not in use.

VERDICT



**FIVE THINGS TO LOOK FOR...**

- 1** A jam-packed bag with a tripod could weigh 15kg, so seek out **wide shoulder straps** and a waist belt.
- 2** Many camera backpacks feature **side openings** to keep your camera quickly accessible.
- 3** Versatile interiors can convert to house **multiple configurations**, or even a small drone.
- 4** Look for a **rugged plastic base** and you needn't worry about resting your bag on wet ground.
- 5** Wet camera kit just won't do, so ensure your chosen bag's **outer material** is at least shower-proof.



[www.tenba.com](http://www.tenba.com)

**Tenba  
Shootout 32L**  
£230/\$300



[www.thinktankphoto.com](http://www.thinktankphoto.com)

**Think Tank  
StreetWalker Pro V2.0**  
£194/\$200



[www.vanguardworld.com](http://www.vanguardworld.com)

**Vanguard  
Alta Sky 51D**  
£200/\$230

4

**COMPARED** with some bags that can be accessed left, right and centre, the Shootout is a more conventional design, with one large front panel and a side-hatch for fast access to your camera. The front opening may not be best for security, but it doesn't try to spring closed unprompted, and it offers an unobscured view of all your gear. We'd like a side opening on both sides, though, as the left-only hatch won't feel natural for some.

Inside, padding is generous. Two of the horizontal shelves have cutouts to encircle a large attached lens. Up front is a huge, versatile full-height pocket, while a 15-inch laptop can slide into a back slot.

And it's round the back that the Shootout really excels. The shoulder straps are generously wide and well-padded, assisted by the largest and most comfortable hip belt in this test. Back padding is equally comfortable, while a metal chassis frame is matched only by the MindShift bag and makes the Shootout feel more robust than most.

VERDICT



5

**THE** StreetWalker lines up alongside Peak Design's bag as a more compact, city-friendly option. Its narrow 25cm external width keeps you streamlined; while this restricts the internal layout to two columns rather than three, these are wide and deep, and will neatly house a pair of full-frame cameras with large-diameter attached lenses; one facing down, the other up. Depending on your lens choice, extra dividers can fit around additional optics. You can also strap a tripod to the front, and there's room for a 10-inch tablet in a pouch at the rear.

Like the Tenba Shootout, the StreetWalker is accessed via a single no-nonsense front flap, but there's no side opening for off-the-shoulder mobile access. This isn't surprising given the vertically optimised internal layout, but it's still a pity if you need to grab your camera for a fleeting shot.

You don't get a waist belt, either, but the shoulder straps and back padding are excellent, and the bag is very comfortable to wear.

VERDICT



6

**THE** Alta Sky is designed to carry camera gear, a drone, or a combination of both. The main compartment has room for a pro DSLR with attached 70-200mm lens, and up to four lenses around it. Padding is good, and there's a hatch on one side for mobile access, although openings on both sides would be better.

Primary access to this area is via a large rear panel that contains a slot for a 15-inch laptop. The flap opens wide, but you'll need to bend the shoulder straps out of the way for unobstructed camera access. Alternatively, another body and a trio of small lenses will stow in a compartment in the base, accessed by folding the rest of the bag back like a lid. It's more convenient than it sounds.

Up top is reasonably spacious area for personal effects, and its floor is removable so that the mid compartment can be enlarged, to allow long lenses to pass through from above.

Comfort is assured by good-sized hip pads, thick back padding and generous shoulder straps.

VERDICT

