

Have You Read the Binocular Reviews?

Digital camera binoculars seem to get low reviews. Most are said to be no better than taping a camera onto your set of binoculars. You have to lose out on the quality of either the camera or the binocular because it's hard to find a pair that works together to provide the best quality for your money. What good is a wonderful enlargement with a fuzzy picture? Most digital cameras can't even come close to the magnification capabilities of binoculars. Zoom is limited, field of vision is different. The one combination that seems to come the closest to the best quality is the Bushnell 8x32 Instant Replay 18-0833. It can be found at an average price of \$371.

The night vision binoculars that receive an extremely high rating (and, of course, an extremely high price tag) are the Night Shadow 4th Generation Night Vision Binocular. Yes, of course they offer payment options. You'd think at a price of \$6000, the manufacturer would offer a more private way to ship them. The contents are apparent on the packaging. Let's hope your mail carrier knows how to keep mum. If you're hoping to purchase this as a gift for your much-adored husband, you'd better beat him to the mailbox on delivery day. This equipment is said to be the biggest in image intensification over the past 10 years. It's kinda creepy, though, not knowing who might be leading a secret agent wanna-be life in your neck of the neighborhood! No license needed to purchase makes them readily to whatever public can afford the hefty price tag.

If it's marine binoculars you're shopping for, there are several top brands to choose from. Two that stand out are: Steiner 7x50 Marine binoculars and Bushnell 7x50 Marine Binoculars. The Steiner pair has a great auto-focus and a rain and spray guard for the lenses. They cost around \$283, and they're shockproof. The Bushnell pair seems to have a negative review on their compass feature, but they offer a range finder in the left eye, which is appealing to anyone who has a right-eye vision challenge. The average cost of these is around \$108, and they're fog proof.

If you're a serious birdwatcher, good dependable binoculars are a necessity. Nikon is a name that stands out in this field. The Nikon 8x42 Monarch ATB, the Nikon 10x50 Action EX, and the Nikon Premier 10x42 all receive good ratings. These cost around \$300, give or take a few bucks.

Hunters like the Leupold Golden Ring 10x42 binoculars. If you're able to fit their \$1000 price range, they offer an irresistible lifetime guarantee, which you'd most likely prefer with this much of an investment. They do work for people who must hunt using eyeglasses. For someone who is on a hunting equipment budget, the spouse would be most likely be more happy with the lower

cost of \$50 for the Olympus RC 8x21 outback binoculars. Although they don't have waterproofing and their small size might make them a challenge for someone who has big hands.

Reviews are great, but remember that the only true test of a binocular is the actual use in the outdoors. Use the reviews as a guidance tool to narrow your choices.