

What to Look For in the Best Binoculars

Just like anything else, when you purchase a pair of binoculars you want to know that you are purchasing the best possible pair. The huge variety in price can make the process of selecting and purchasing the best pair of binoculars confusing, as can each individual pair of binoculars specifications.

Before you go shopping for a pair of binoculars you need to sit down and decide what you will be using the binoculars for. Will you be hunting, whale watching, or watching birds, or looking for a pair of military binoculars. Knowing what you will be using the binoculars for will give you a specific type of binoculars to look for. If you are planning on using your binoculars for birdwatching you want to look for a pair that is designed with good image quality. If you are planning on taking your binoculars on the family boat you will want a pair that is completely waterproof.

Once you have decided what you will be looking for decide what you can afford to spend. Set a budget and stick to it.

Try to decide on a size that is convenient. Like cameras and cell phones, binoculars are getting smaller and smaller. The advantage of compact binoculars is that they are easy to carry and use. The downside to a pair of compact binoculars is that it is easier for a unorganized person to lose them. It is also easier for a thief to walk off with a pair of compact binoculars.

The general rule of thumb is, unless your a private investigator, to avoid purchasing a pair of binoculars with a magnification greater than 10X's. Magnification over ten tends to cause the binoculars to lose some of the image's crispness. The image is also duller when the magnification is greater than ten. Binoculars that are designed with a roof prism make the best use of natural lighting.

Binoculars that have lenses that are coated with red, are designed to enhance the image. Dark coated lenses provide the best image and last longer than uncoated lenses.

Even if you aren't planning on taking your new binoculars on a boat, spending a few extra dollars on a pair that has waterproof housing. You may not be planning on getting them wet, but things happen; you might trip and drop them in a mud puddle, take them out on a foggy day, or might get caught in a freak rain shower, and don't forget about small children and their fascination with dropping electronic equipment in toilets. The waterproof housing will pay for itself again and again.

Know the marketplace. Spend some time learning if there are any retail stores that sell binoculars. Scan the Internet, there are hundreds of binocular dealers on-line, these dealers typically offer the lowest prices. Another perk to on-line binocular dealers is that you are typically corresponding via e-mail, this makes the dealer seem less pushy than one you may encounter in a retail store that is working for a commission. The best plan is to get to know an on-line binocular dealer. Start asking questions, start researching binoculars, keep a list of pros and cons of different binoculars that are in your price range. After you have selected a few pairs that sound promising, drive to a binocular dealer and try out each of the pairs you have selected. Test their range of vision, and the clarity of the lenses. Make sure the binoculars are comfortable and you understand how they function. If you wear glasses, make sure they are on when you are trying out binoculars.

After trying out binoculars find out where you'll get the best price, the retail store or the on-line dealer.