

Essential extras

Have you ever noticed that it's the little things that make life so much more pleasant? Check out our recommendations for all outdoor photographers...

»Lee Filters kit

£368 combined

www.leefilters.com

Landscape photographers benefit most from investing in this gear but it can come in handy for many other types of photography too. Our recommended kit includes a filter holder (£50), thread adapter (£34), neutral density grad (£55), polariser (£199) and its 105mm adapter (£30). Yep, that's quite an investment but it will make a hefty difference to your pictures as well as your bank balance, as the filters you get are of a very high quality.

RATING ★★★★★



»Fuji cleaning kit £7.99

Fuji, www.fujifilm.co.uk

In order to get the best from your lenses you need to make sure that they are always clean and free from smudges and dust. Once you have got rid of the dust, it's time to give the optics a good wipe. This cleaning kit is particularly handy, as it includes a quality microfiber cloth and a decent cleaning solution, and it all comes in a handy little case that clips onto your belt to ensure you always have it ready. Remember to spray the solution onto part of the cloth rather than directly onto the lens.

RATING ★★★★★

»Kata E-702 £59

Kata, www.kata-bags.com

This large weatherproof cover is one of the simplest yet most practical raincovers we've seen. Not only is it mostly made from transparent plastic that allows you to both see through the viewfinder and review your pictures on the LCD, but it also has side armholes so you can actually operate your camera. It fits most SLRs from the small Canon EOS 350D right up to pro cameras such as the Nikon D2x, with standard zoom or short telephoto attached. If you are planning to shoot with a longer pro lens you may need to invest in the extra Element lens sleeves to make sure your precious lenses are kept safe. If you intend to shoot lots of sports or wildlife, a good raincover is essential gear and this is certainly one of the best available.

RATING ★★★★★



»Giottos Q.Ball £8.99

JP Distribution, www.johnsons-photopia.co.uk

Before you wipe the glass on any lens, you should always give it a blow or brush to remove dust or grit that could cause nasty scratches as you clean. Slightly different from the familiar rocket blower, the Q.Ball has an adjustable tip to make the process more comfortable at every angle. We'd advise always carrying one of these in your kit bag, especially out on location. They're also handy for keeping other gadgets (such as your mobile phone) clean and dust-free too.

RATING ★★★★★

»Op/Tech hood hat

£7-£11

Newpro, www.newprouk.co.uk

We all know how annoying it can be if you have to keep removing your lens hood to replace the lens. This is particularly frustrating when you are shooting anywhere there's water or mud spraying about. The Op/Tech hood hat is one of the simplest solutions we've found. It's a neoprene cover that slips over the front of your lens with or without the lens hood attached. It's a simple yet highly effective and time-saving way of keeping your optics safe, while making sure you are always ready for the next shot.

RATING ★★★★★



In my opinion...

"Keeping my kit clean isn't high on my list of priorities when I'm out on location. So instead of struggling to find – let alone fit – a normal lens cap to protect my lens this handy little gadget has saved my lens from sea spray, rain and mud so often in the last year that I'd be lost without it."

Chris Rutter, *technique editor*

