



Caring for your Optics

Store your binoculars or scope in its case. Keep the caps on until you are ready for viewing.

Dust, dirt and pollens all may find their way to your lenses. First try to dislodge any debris by blowing. If further cleaning is necessary, use a soft cloth (many optics come with a cleaning cloth) or cotton ball. Be gentle and use a circular motion.

Commercial aids such as lens cleaners and the Lens Pen will help your binoculars or scope last for many years.

Get the Best View - How to Focus your Binoculars

Adjust the binoculars to your eyes by using the “diopter setting.”

- Set the diopter to zero. It is usually located on the right-hand eyepiece, or on more expensive binoculars it is in the center of the unit.
- Cover the objective lens of the side with the diopter setting with your hand or the lens cap.
- Using the center-focus wheel, focus on a specific object with just the one eye.
- Cover the other objective lens, then using just the diopter setting adjustment, focus on the same object.
- Now the binoculars are adjusted for your eyes and the diopter setting should not need adjusting unless moved.

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What is The Seattle Audubon Society?

The Seattle Audubon Society protects birds and the natural environment by involving volunteers and the community in education, advocacy, preservation, science and enjoyment. Founded in 1916, we have never wavered in our commitment to ensure the well-being of birds and the natural environment.

The Nature Shop—Your Complete Wild Bird Source

Hundreds of nature-related gifts, books and wild bird supplies can be found here along with specially formulated seed for Pacific Northwest birds. All proceeds benefit the programs of Seattle Audubon.

Visit us on the Web:
www.seattleaudubon.org

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and Nature Shop
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Seattle, Washington 98115

Monday - Saturday, 10:00AM - 4:00PM

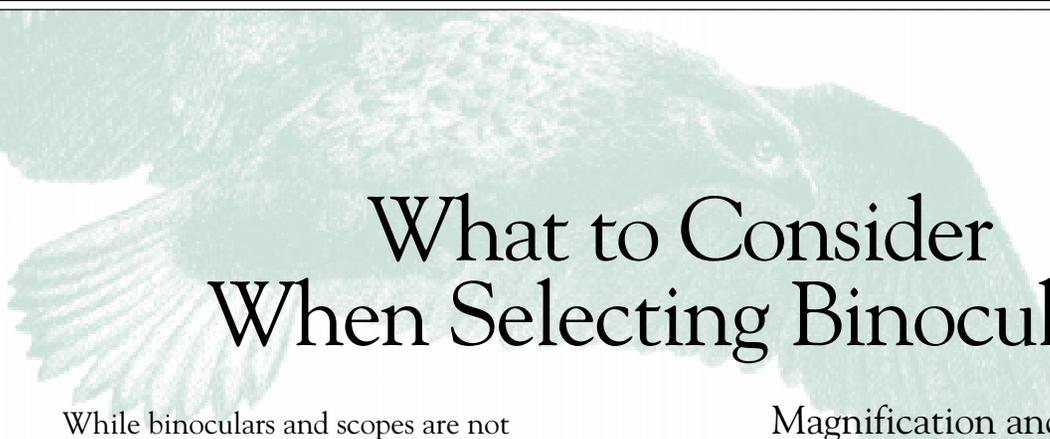


Seattle Audubon Society is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization. All gifts are tax-deductible.

Choosing and Using Optics

A Guide from The Seattle Audubon Nature Shop

We'll help you find the right equipment to increase your enjoyment of birds and wildlife.



What to Consider When Selecting Binoculars

While binoculars and scopes are not essential to enjoy birdwatching, they can help you obtain more detail and increase your appreciation for birds and wildlife. This guide will explain some of the technical terms, and help you learn more about optics.

How Do you Plan to Use Them?

Will these be your only pair? Will you use them for birding? Boating? Sports? The theater? Are they for a child? Armored binoculars are more waterproof and shock-resistant, but sometimes heavier. Will you be using them in low-light conditions? Bigger lenses let in more light.

Binoculars are more portable and more affordable than monocular scopes. However, scopes provide greater magnification, allowing birds to appear even closer.

Because of their size and power, scopes require a tripod as well. Serious birders often have both.

Size and Weight

Compact binoculars are lighter and less bulky, but let in less light. Remember that weight can be important if you are birding all day.

Magnification and Features

- *Power* tells you how much larger something will appear. It is the first number. For example, binoculars labeled 8x30 are 8 power. The highest power that can be comfortably handheld is 10. At this power it is more difficult to hold an image steady and to locate your image through the lens. Most birders use 7-10 power binoculars.
- *Brightness* refers to the amount of light entering the binoculars through the objective lens (the larger lenses farthest from your eyes). For 8x30 binoculars, 30 is the objective size in millimeters. Bright binoculars reproduce greater detail and perform better in low light, such as a dense forest, cloudy conditions or dusk.
- *Field of view* is the width in feet of the view at 1,000 yards distance. A wide field may be desired by birders who want to quickly pick up a bird in flight. The greater the power, the narrower the field of view.
- *Eye relief* is the distance the binoculars can be held from the eye, especially important if you wear eyeglasses or

sunglasses. Long eye relief provides greater comfort and may be required for a complete view.

- *Prisms* are the glass elements inside the binoculars. There are two basic types - porro and roof prisms. Porro prism models are slightly lighter and more traditionally shaped. Roof prism models are sturdier and provide greater clarity, although they tend to be more expensive.
- *Coatings* are applied to lenses to reduce internal and external reflections, producing clearer, sharper images with better color.
- *Other features* include nitrogen purging, which provides greater water and fog proofing; twist-up eye-cups for better long eye relief and infinite adjustment; and close focus.

We have many excellent brands to choose from, and you can try them out at The Nature Shop. Bird outings and field trips also provide excellent opportunities to talk to users and examine a variety of brands and models in use.

Price

Price reflects the quality of the glass, the coatings and the materials used in the mechanical parts, and the casing. The most expensive binoculars can provide a lifetime of distortion-free images, weather resistance and perfect alignment.