

THE VERSATILITY OF THE NOVOFLEX TRIPOD SYSTEM (Novoflex TrioBalance Ground Pod)



Robert Thompson

INTRODUCTION

I've been a long-time user and promoter of the Novoflex TrioPod system. Like many photographers I have, over the years, bought various tripods but never found one that would meet the needs of all of the types of photography I would normally undertake.

Novoflex has a worldwide reputation in the photographic world of innovation and specialise in the design and fabrication of a wide range of professional equipment from panoramic to macro. I own and have tested many of their products over the last few years. There are reviews on my website of many different accessories that I currently use in the field.



The TrioBalance with the short mini legs and the Q=Base attached.

In macro photography, there are frequent occasions when you want to position your camera as close to the ground as possible for a number of reasons. For example, background control, and keeping the

camera's sensor parallel as much as possible to the subject, especially when selecting wider apertures. With conventional tripods that are capable of going flat to the ground the height of the various heads plus the camera often mean that it is still a reasonable distance off the ground. It often requires you to tilt the camera, or position it on a bean bag which I consider not ideal for serious macro photography. When you buy into the TrioPod System you get a set of three Mini Legs which are extremely useful when it comes to photographing a range of subjects from challenging positions such as, walls, bridges and when shooting at ground level.



The TrioBalance complete with the short mini legs screwed in place. One of the advantages of this setup is the versatility of being able to work from ground level up.



The TrioBalance in position to take a wide-angle in-situ macro shot. (Top right) Fly Agaric Amanita muscaria (Bottom right) Small Stagshorn Calocera cornea.

Ground pods are an accessory that not many companies manufacture. Manfrotto, Really Right Stuff etc., are among the most well-known. There is also the widely published disk-like ground pod which in my opinion, is too large and cumbersome for macro at ground level. These types of device also damage more of the vegetation due to their size. I use a ground pod quite a lot especially when I am working in meadows and when doing fungi photography where most of my subjects are quite low to the ground.



One of my ideal setups is the TrioBalance in combination with the mini legs, and the Q=Base, this setup gives the greatest amount of versatility and keeps the whole camera assembly very close to ground level. It is easily carried and is extremely stable even with the Nikon Z 9 and when I'm using longer lenses. There are also adjustments in elevation in each leg so when moving from subject to subject you can quickly make height adjustments if required.



With the TrioBalance you also have a built-in adjustment of 15° on the platform which is handy for making compositional changes when framing. There is no need for a conventional head just the Q=base for ease of attachment and removal of the camera. This is my preferred way to work when dealing with subjects at ground level. The stability is excellent and focus stacking can be easily carried out without the need to revert to a tripod.



(Top left) the TrioBalance showing the operating flexibility in height you have while still being able to have a solid stable platform. You can easily focus stack with this unit and be assured of obtaining accurate and precise consecutive images.

(Below left) Close-up showing the angulated platform and the degree of tilt for adjustment. The central screw hole will allow additional accessories to be added to the unit for example, a flexible gooseneck for lighting if required.

(Above)The TrioBalance can be used in many situations where a tripod would be more awkward to position as in the case. The stability is excellent and I was able to focus stack this tiny fungi.



(Top) A plan view showing how easily the legs adapt along the tree trunk. (Below) The finished image of the small tiny fungi. (Right) I had the TrioBalance totally flat and tilted up slightly to catch the bokeh above.





Even if you don't at this stage own any of the Novoflex TrioPods you can still acquire the TrioBalance which is perfect for panoramic photography and doubles as an excellent ground pod!



*(Left) Early Purple Orchid *Orchis mascula*. Shooting flat from the ground allows you to throw the background well out of focus.*

(Above) The TrioBalance is easily carried and not heavy. It fits neatly into the side pocket of most photographic backpacks.

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PHOTOGRAPHY



www.robertthompsonphotography.com