

Photography masterclass:

11. Kit

Professional photographer **Zak Waters** originally started out as an assistant to several Magnum photographers and now freelances for the quality UK press and news agencies. Here he discusses the best equipment to carry



When it comes to kit, I actually don't have that much; mainly because I don't like toting it around. I know what lenses I need for most shoots, but will bring others

depending on the nature of the work. But lenses aren't the only equipment you need to think about. There are other essentials you shouldn't leave home without.

I can't stress enough how important a good camera bag is. I have a superb Tamrac backpack and a couple of Domke, Lowepro and Billingham shoulder bags; I have more bags than kit. Shop around and test them out. Think about what you are going to put in it and most importantly how heavy it will be with all your equipment inside. Sometimes I have to lug around my Notebook, so you may want to consider a bag that will protect your computer as well.

Investing in a good tripod is also a must. There are some amazing lightweight and durable tripods on the market. I've always

believed that you get what you pay for with tripods. Think about where you're going to use it – if you're scaling peaks in Snowdonia you don't want to lug a huge heavyweight tripod around with you.

A lot of cameras these days have a built-in flash. These things scare me a little and the effect is often very crude. If you have a digital SLR, it's worth investing in a flash gun. Using flash is a skill which comes with practice. If you do invest in one experiment and work on a formula which you feel comfortable with.

If you're on the move a lot it's always

worth investing in a good card reader – like the Advent ADE-RDR01 – to download your memory cards. I'd always advise taking a couple of memory cards, just in case one goes down. The price of these has fallen dramatically in the last few years, but it pays to do a little research into which are the most popular. I've only ever used SanDisk Ultras or Extremes, but that's my personal preference. Some memory cards are topping 32GB, but I've never liked putting all my eggs in one basket and usually go for 4GB cards and spread my job around on different cards.



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