

Vanguard Tripod Support EcoSystem

This latest selection of accessories will help photographers and content creators fully exploit their tripods

SPECS

- › **Prices**
- CSM coldshoe mount £9.99
- CSM DLX directional coldshoe mount £34.99
- CSMM2 expandable double coldshoe mount £69.99
- CSMM3 triple directional coldshoe mount £49.99

TSA DLX M tripod support arm

- › **Price** £79.99
- › **Fits** Any tripod with 1/4in or 3/8in thread hole
- › **Max load** 3kg
- › **Max extension** 18cm
- › **Folds to** 11.3cm
- › **Weight** 217g

TSA DLX L tripod support arm

- › **Price** £89.99
- › **Fits** Any tripod with 1/4in or 3/8in thread hole
- › **Max load** 3kg
- › **Max extension** 29cm
- › **Folds to** 16.7cm
- › **Weight** 297g
- › **Contact** vanguardworld.co.uk



GROWING ATTACHED (From left to right) CSMM2 expandable double coldshoe; CSMM3 triple directional coldshoe mount; CSM DLX directional coldshoe mount; CSM coldshoe mount; TSA DLX L tripod support arm; and TSA DLX M tripod support arm

THE DEMANDS OF modern imaging mean that the humble tripod is required to do much more than keep a camera steady. Many photographers need to hold a light, microphone or monitor – or all three. This desire for extra versatility also applies to camera accessory shoes.

Vanguard's first products in its VEO Tripod Support EcoSystem could be just the ticket when you need an extra hand. In this test, we check out four coldshoe mounts: the CSM, CSM DLX, CSMM2 and CSMM3. And two support arms: the TSA DLX M and TSA DLX L.

The build quality of all accessories is first rate, each made from CNC aluminium – and the fittings work firmly. For example, on the support arms, the main locking knob is big and easy to grip. Once fully tightened, the two mini ball heads and arm sections hold accessories very tightly in place. There's no slippage, as you might experience with cheaper options. There are nice touches, too. Allen keys are supplied with most items and the two arms come with 1/4in and 3/8in screws.

I tried a selection of imaging kit, including flashguns, LED lights, mics and an LCD monitor. The more I used, the more I appreciated the

Vanguards. The usefulness of the kit depends on what you shoot, but I found several instances where it proved invaluable.

When shooting flatlays, I have a light panel on the table and the camera on a tripod above, so I attach an LCD monitor for composing. The TSA DLX L arm was great for holding it in position, while the CSMM3 coldshoe mount was good on an outdoor portrait shoot. It held two flashguns on a tripod when an unweighted lighting stand wasn't practical in the breeze. The coldshoes

are a tight fit for dedicated hotshoe flashguns, and you have to push in the spring-loaded contacts with your finger to slide the flash into position.

I tested the TSA DLX M arm with a mobile phone (with an optional holder), while shooting water droplets. The CSMM2 expandable mount came in handy to hold a couple of LED lights for outdoor close-ups, a monitor and light for video, or a light and webcam.

I didn't have to work hard to find a use for these accessories; it's worth having a selection in your toolkit. **WC**



THREE ON ONE The CSMM3, in combination with the CSM, lets you fix three peripherals onto the camera accessory shoe. It has a 1/4in thread, so the CSMM3 can be attached directly to a tripod



SCREEN TEST The two tripod arms can be used on any 1/4in or 3/8in screw fittings. Here, the monitor was held in position using the TSA DLX M tripod support arm



DOUBLE UP LED lights, mics, monitors, flashguns and other peripherals can be used on the CSMM2

Verdict

Speaking from personal experience, it is true that you can buy similar devices from well-known online retailers. But their quality can be variable, and they don't do the job as capably as these Vanguards. If you're having problems holding imaging equipment securely and in the right position, this family of accessories could have the answer.

PROS Great build, really useful, locks work firmly, good value

CONS The coldshoe mounts could be slightly bigger to accommodate dedicated flashguns more easily