

Peterson EZ Binocular Mount Kit

A binocular pipe mount that really works!

By Erik Wilcox

Erik demonstrates use of the EZ Binoc Mount



I enjoy tinkering and building things – and, if it's related to astronomy, all the better! I'd heard about the Peterson EZ Binocular Mounting Kits before, but had never seen one in person, so was excited to get the kit and build a mount from it to review for *ATT*.

The box arrived with all the necessary parts, verified by the enclosed list and photo of everything contained in the kit. Also included is a rather extensive, well written instruction manual (complete with pictures) on what other materials are needed, as well as how to put everything together. To reduce the price of the kit, as well as shipping costs, the kit does not come with pipes and other parts that are easily obtained at most hardware stores.

The kit does come with all hard-to-find parts, as well as the specially drilled pipe fittings for the mount.

All the pipe and fittings that need to be purchased separately are clearly outlined in the instruction manual, and there's also a picture. I took the manual with me to the hardware store to make sure I didn't forget anything. The purchased pipe can be found in black, or in galvanized steel. I chose the galvanized finish because it is durable and doesn't need to be painted.

The kit is \$99 and I obtained the pipe and other materials for about \$70. I'm sure that, with a bit of shopping around, lower prices could be found on the extra parts. I purchased all the pipe

and assorted fittings from OSH, a local hardware chain, and got the barbell weights (used as counterweights) from Target.

Putting everything together was easy. No exotic tools are needed – just a pipe wrench or some large *Vise-Grips*. Some paper towels and hand cleaner is also recommended. The raw pipe is dirty (especially if you choose the black pipe) and the grinding compound can be especially messy.

Patience is not my strong point and I don't always follow directions particularly well. Luckily, putting the mount together is rather straightforward and intuitive. The pictures and instructions included are thorough and, should you run into

PETERSON EZ BINOCULAR MOUNT KIT



Shown are most of the locally obtained parts needed for construction of the complete mount.

Some assembly required...

any problems, more information can be found on the Peterson website, at www.petersonengineering.com.

The mount relies on correct balance (though the thumbscrews incorporated in the design can add a bit more friction), so the counterweights are important. Common barbell weights with a 1-inch hole

are used for this purpose and are held in place with the included clamps and washers. Pete Peterson recommends one 5 pound weight for small binoculars, or a 5-pound weight plus two 2.5-pound weights for giant binoculars. My local Target store was out of the 5-pound weights, so I bought two 2.5-pound

weights instead. The mount would be primarily used with my Orion 10x50s, but I tried them with the Surplus Shed KonusVue 20 x 80s as well. Both binos worked well on the mount with no further counterbalancing necessary. For very large binoculars (over 100mm?), Peterson offers the new EZ Binoc Supermount Kit.

The EZ Binoc Mounting Kit can be configured for use with binoculars that have a mounting hole parallel to the optical tubes, or for those that have a mounting post perpendicular to the tubes.

Transporting the mount requires a bit of disassembly. In fact, just getting it out the door was difficult at first without removing at least one of the tripod legs. However, after doing it a couple of times, I found it was possible to get the mount outside without any disassembly. Of course, disassembly wouldn't ever be necessary if the mount was left outside, and the galvanized pipe should stand up to the elements well.

I mostly view standing up, but the mount seems to work very well with the viewer seated or lying down as well. With the 20x80s mounted, it was easy to point at any part of the sky, and the motions were smooth. Just grab the swing arms, and go to any place in the sky! Tightening the hand knob a bit on the fine azimuth

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PETERSON EZ BINOCULAR MOUNT KIT




Assembling the tripod section of the mount.

adjustment handle gave it a nice feel for fine tuning. The long, 36-inch pipe arm that holds the counterweights provides a nice center of gravity for the mount. I

found that I could place the mount in any position, with the binoculars mounted, and they'd stay in place, hands-free.

The Peterson EZ Binoc Mount Kit is a well-designed and well-thought out system. I know of no other mount that would hold binoculars as solidly for such a low price. There's also a sense of accomplishment in putting something together yourself from a kit and the finished mount looks impressive. Anyone who's the least bit mechanically inclined should have no problem building a mount from this kit.

The EZ Binoc Mount weighs about 20 pounds, including the counterweights, which is not at all heavy. It's easy to pick up and move, or disassemble for transport, and using the mount is simple and intuitive. It's obvious that Pete put a lot of thought into the design and it shows in the final product. If you've got binoculars that need mounting, the Peterson EZ Binoc Mounting Kit is the way to go! 

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