

Tripod levelling base



1. Introduction:

Levelling your camera equipment for specific projects (such as panoramas) isn't always an easy or fun job.

Personally, I had never found the right accessory for my relatively heavy equipment, everything was either too big and heavy, or not sturdy at all and thus very unstable.

What I needed was something the right size that weighed as little as possible but also offered maximum stability, seeing as I'd be using it in combination with some pretty heavy equipment.

2. My discovery:

Berlebach is a German company that has been around for ages (since 1898 to be precise), which has specialised in high-quality precision equipment – mainly photography-related – such as tripods, ball heads, levelling bases and accessories.

They're the undisputed leaders in stylish wooden photography equipment accessories, all of which are perfectly-crafted luxury objects. Very early on, Berlebach was able to expand its range by adapting to the market, which is why today it offers a wide range of tripod accessories, all made of light material without abandoning their legendary sturdiness. I'd like to introduce levelling bases "N75" and "N60", which I was allowed to try out before their release, in December 2012. These levelling bases are inspired from ball heads, but are much easier and lighter to use!

3. What are the specifications?

As mentioned, two models exist, which can easily support 15kg (N75) and 10kg (N60).

The platform that supports the camera, ball head or other accessories measures 62mm (N75), whereas the N60 platform measures 55mm. Both are also nice and light: the N75 and N60 weigh 320g and 305g respectively.

Here are the technical specifications of these levelling bases:



Above: N75

Technische Daten	N 60	N 75
Maße ohne Griff (B x L x H)	60 x 70 x 39 mm Höhe mit 3/8"PIN 45 mm	95 x 85 x 36 mm Höhe mit 3/8"PIN 42 mm
Maße mit Griff (B x L x H)	60 x 115 x 39 mm Höhe mit 3/8"PIN 45 mm	95 x 140 x 36 mm Höhe mit 3/8"PIN 42 mm
Kameraauflagefläche	Ø 55 mm	Ø 62 mm
Stativanschluss	Ø 55 mm	Ø 68 mm
Belastbar	bis 10 kg	bis 15 kg
Drehmoment	10 Nm	20 Nm
Gewicht	305 g	320 g
Neigung	20°	15°
Art.-Nr.	320410	320412

4. How to use the levelling bases (in this case the N75):

Connect it directly to the tripod's centre post, which generally has a 3/8" screw attachment. Once it's in place and securely screwed on, it becomes one with the tripod, which is very important.

From that point onwards, the tripod no longer needs levelling, as the levelling base takes over the job with a flexibility and speed that cannot be accomplished with a tripod alone!

The built-in spirit level allows you to adjust the mobile part of the base until the bubble is right in the middle. Then tighten the base with the handle and you're all set.

Now you can mount whichever accessory you were planning on using, whether it be a straightforward ball head (Arca Swiss, Markins, Benro, ...), a manual or automatic panoramic head, a gimbal head, etc.

The base of your accessory will always be level, all you have to do (with ball heads) is make sure the mobile part is level.

5. The pros and cons of this levelling head:

The pros:

- Very smooth and easy circular levelling;
- Up to 15° tilt range (20° for the N60);
- The offset position of the spirit level bubble, which makes it easy to read in every position;
- Once tightened, the levelling base remains firmly in place. Easily holds up to 15kg of equipment;
- Smooth anodized surface (which guarantees smooth adjustments);
- Super lightweight compared to other brands (the Manfrotto 338, for example, weighs a hefty 600g!);
- Interesting price for a high-quality **German** product!

The cons:

- Max 15° tilt range for the N75;
- Rather inelegant tightening handle;
- Only has a 3/8" screw thread;

Those are the only real remarks I have...

6. Images:



7. Conclusions:

This levelling base has the advantages of a ball head (fast and easy), yet also meets the requirements of the equipment that needs to be mounted.

This is a new product and will be marketed in the course of January 2013.

Its sturdiness and weight really surpassed my expectations, and I especially liked how quick and easy it was to use. (I soon forgot all about my old, cumbersome, complicated levelling base.)

In my opinion, every photographer who needs his or her pictures to be level should definitely have one of these in their collection. The best levelling base I've come across to date!

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