

[pro]master®

XC-M TRIPODS



INSTRUCTION MANUAL

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*Our XC-M tripods and accessories come with ProMaster's one-year unconditional warranty, extend your warranty to three years by registering your tripod at **xc-m.promaster.com**. Explore the site to discover the entire XC-M line, and sign up for our newsletter for product updates!*

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INTRODUCTION

Hello, and welcome to the world of XC-M tripods! You have purchased a fine tool designed for passionate photographers. A tripod is a terrific device for not only holding your camera steady; but, it is also as a great compositional aid. We hope this new XC-M tripod kit will elevate your camera and your images!

Please read through this instruction guide thoroughly, even if you have operated other types of tripods before, as the XC-M's controls may differ. We want your experience with this dandy new XC-M to be as fantastic as possible.

This manual begins with an explanation of how to operate the XC-M legs and ball head before it addresses attaching your camera. We recommend learning these operation and controls without a camera attached first. Your camera is valuable and by knowing how to handle this tripod kit properly you can prevent accidental damage from misuse.

Be sure to refer to the main parts diagram as well as each of the numbered figures as you read so you can understand the names of all of the parts referred to. Whenever a specific part of the XC-M is referred to in red, you will find it shown on the main parts diagram and/or in the referenced figure. When a figure is used to more specifically demonstrate something, it is listed, by number, in parentheses in the text nearby.

INITIAL SETUP

When you first unbox your XC-M kit you will find it in its most compact, storage state (see figure 1). Ideally, this is how you will collapse and fold your tripod kit before travel and transport, when you need to minimize its size.

Begin unfolding the legs from their transverse position. Grab ahold of two legs in their middles with one hand while taking hold of the third leg near its rubber tip and leg locks with the other hand. Pull this third leg away and open it a full 180 degrees. Once you have passed the 90-degree point in doing this you will hear a series of 3 soft 'clicks'. These clicks represent each of the 3 possible leg positions which can be used. Once you have heard the third click you can stop opening the leg. Now reverse its direction and move it until it stops. You have opened the leg to position #1 (see figure 2). Now repeat this process for the other 2 legs while finding the most convenient place to hold the tripod in doing so. Once all 3 legs have been unfolded into position #1 the tripod can be placed on a flat surface like a floor or table.

You will notice the Quick Release or "QR plate" is pre-attached to the XC-M's ball head. Leave it there for now while you go through the next two sections to learn more about the XC-M's operation.

A black fabric pouch is attached to the tripod's yoke with a small, red carabiner. This is a **Tool Kit** (see figure 3) which can be used for making adjustments to the tripod. You can choose to leave it attached to the tripod for safe keeping or you can remove the Tool Kit. If you have purchased either the ProMaster 3580 XC-M Shoulder Strap or the ProMaster 3587 Hipster & Strap Kit you can store these tools in the integrated pouches featured in those accessories.

The final part of our initial setup is to ensure the ball head is securely attached to the tripod. Sometimes it can become loose after manufacturing and during shipping. With the tripod legs in position #1 raise the **Center Column Upper Section** to its maximum height by first loosening the **Center Column Upper Lock**. Slide this section up and then tighten the **Center Column Upper Lock** to keep it in place. Now look at the underside of the **Center Column Platform**. You will see one small, silver-colored bolt know as a **Grub Screw** (see figure 3). Open the tool kit and remove the **Small Hex Key** (see figure 3). Use it to ensure the **Grub Screw** is tight. If the Grub Screw is loose, first take ahold of the **Ball Head** and make sure its **Panning Knob** is tight. Now rotate the **Ball Head** against the **Center Column Platform** to ensure it is tight. Then tighten the Grub Screw to keep it in place.

1



XC-M in transverse position

2



Leg Position #1
(20° leg angles)



Leg Position #2
(50° leg angles)



Leg Position #3
(80° leg angles)

3



Grub Screw



Tool Kit

Small Hex Wrench
(2.5mm)

Medium Hex Wrenches (4mm)

OPERATING THE TRIPOD

In this section of the manual, we will explore proper operation of the tripod including its legs and center column. This includes everything from the Column Platform down (not including the ball head).

1) USING THE TRANSVERSE FEATURE

We have already begun to discuss the transverse, folding feature of the legs in the Initial Setup section of this manual. You should also practice returning your XC-M to its most compact state. This is not simply a reverse of opening it. To fold the XC-M you must use the **Leg Angle Switches** to prevent accidental damage to the tripod.

Begin by ensuring **Center Column Lower Section** is raised to its maximum height while **Center Column Upper Section** is collapsed to its minimum height. Hold the Center Column with one hand while taking hold of the upper portion of one leg with your other hand. Wrap your hand around the leg and place your thumb on its **Leg Angle Switch**. Press down on the **Leg Angle Switch** and hold it down while you fold the leg upwards toward the center column. Once you have passed the half-way point (90 degrees to the center column) you may release the **Leg Angle Switch** since the leg is now beyond all 3 of its leg position points. Continue to fold the leg all of the way up, into its transverse storage position. Repeat this process for the other 2 legs.

Tip: You may find some resistance when pressing down on each leg angle switch. Before pressing it, push the leg in just a slight amount to relieve the pressure on the switch. Then the switch will become very easy to press.

To unfold the XC-M Tripod from its transverse, storage state. Refer to the Initial Setup section of this manual.

2) ADJUSTING LEG ANGLES

This XC-M tripod has 3 working angles for the legs (20°, 50°, & 80°). Each leg angle can be adjusted independently of the other two. Most of the time you will set all 3 legs to the same angle. However, in some cases of uneven ground you may choose to set the legs at different angles to achieve the best overall stability.

When the XC-M's tripod legs are in a closed position, meaning they are pushed-in, against the center column (not in its compact, transverse state), you can simply pull on each leg until it stops in leg angle position #1 (see [figure 2](#)). This is the most common and most used position for the tripod.

To adjust a leg angle beyond position #1, take ahold of the leg near its top portion. Wrap your hand around the leg and place your thumb on the **Leg Angle Switch**. Press it down to release the leg. Now you can pull the leg out to a further angle. Once you release the **Leg Angle Switch** continue pulling on the leg until it stops to ensure it is properly seated in either leg angle position #2 or #3 (see [figure2](#)). Please do not use excessive force in doing this.

You will notice the **Leg Angle Switches** need to be pressed when extending the legs to a wider stance. However, you do not need to press these switches when pushing the legs in to a narrower stance. To achieve a narrow stance (smaller leg angle) you can simply push each leg in and listen for a "click" as the leg passes one of its angle positions. If you are narrowing the tripod's stance and want to stop at one of these positions, listen for the click and then pull back on the leg just slightly to ensure the leg is properly seated.

We mentioned there are 3 working angle positions for the legs; but, you can actually use a fourth. If you have purchased a ProMaster XC-M Ground Level Adapter (product 3517, 3524, 3531, or 3538 depending on your specific XC-M model) it is possible to put all 3 legs flat on the ground. There is no stop-position on the Leg Angle Switches for this. You will simply pass position #3 and make the 3 legs parallel to the yoke and to each other so they can rest directly on the ground.

OPERATING THE TRIPOD

3) EXTENDING AND COLLAPSING THE LEGS

Your XC-M tripod has 5 sections per leg. This means you have 4 extendable leg sections and one fixed section which is connected to the **Yoke**. All of these legs are keyed, meaning they will not rotate relative to each other. This feature allows you to open or collapse the leg sections in any order. However, for the best stability it is highly recommended you open and use the leg sections from biggest (largest diameter) to smallest (smallest diameter). In other words, extend the largest sections first and carry on in descending order. It is easier to extend the legs when they are not in a closed position. So, open them to leg angle position #1 (see [figure 2](#)), at least, before attempting to extend them.

Wrap your hand around one of the **Leg Locks** and twist it in a left direction (with the tripod upright and facing you). This will unlock it. $\frac{1}{4}$ turn is all that is necessary to unlock each leg lock. Do not go any further. If you rotate and unlock a leg lock too far, that portion of the leg may become unintentionally disassembled. Once a leg lock is unlocked simply pull on the leg below it to extend it to the desired length. Then twist the **Leg Lock** it in a right direction to hold the leg in place. You do not need to apply very much force due to the special design of these locks. Be sure you do not overtighten the locks or you may have a difficult time opening them later.

As you practice extending the legs you will notice when the leg is collapsed you can take hold of just one **Leg Lock** with your fingers or as many as all 4 **Leg Locks** with your entire hand at once. By taking hold of all 4 locks at once and rotating them to an open position you can quickly open your tripod for use, which is particularly helpful in conditions of rapidly changing light.

You do not need to extend a leg all of the way until it stops before tightening a leg lock. You can choose to stop extending any leg anyplace along its length of travel and then tighten a **Leg Lock** to hold it in place. This is useful means of taming uneven ground.

4) EXTENDING AND COLLAPSING THE CENTER COLUMN

The XC-M's **Center Column** uses a 2-stage (a.k.a. 2-section) design. This design provides an excellent, maximum working height while keeping the tripod as compact as possible when fully collapsed. Extending and collapsing the **Center Column** works in a similar fashion to the legs.

To extend or lower either the **Center Column Upper Section** or the **Center Column Lower Section**, wrap your fingers around the **Center Column Upper Lock** or the **Center Column Lower Lock**. Rotate each lock to the right (with the tripod upright and facing you) to loosen it. $\frac{1}{4}$ turn is all that is necessary to unlock each **Center Column Lock**. Do not go any further. If you rotate and unlock a **Center Column Lock** too far, that portion of the column may become unintentionally disassembled. Once they are unlocked simply pull or push on the column section(s) to raise or lower its height. Twist each **Center Column Lock** to the left when you are ready to tighten it and, thereby, hold the column in the desired position.

You may choose to open both column locks at the same time to extend both sections of the center column more quickly. If you do not need to extend both sections at once, it is advisable to extend the **Center Column Lower Section** first, since it is larger and stronger. This will provide a more stable setup than extending the **Center Column Upper Section**.

It is typically best to raise the **Center Column** only once all 3 legs are fully extended and more tripod height is desired. Using the legs for height first ensures a lower center of gravity and better stability. In other words, only extend the **Center Column** when you have to.

OPERATING THE TRIPOD

5) USING THE WEIGHT HOOK

A retractable Weight Hook is connected to the bottom of your XC-M's **Center Column** (see figure 4). This is a pretty cool accessory that can help a lot in achieving better stability for your tripod, especially in windy weather conditions and/or when taking extremely long exposures.

Using the **Weight Hook** is easy. Just tug on the silver hook to extend it and then attach some form of weight to the hook. A camera bag is normally the most convenient type of weight nearby.

Another method is to connect a small cord or rope to the weight hook using a slip knot, running the cord to the ground, and using a tent stake (driven at an angle) to make the rope taught. This takes a little practice but can be an excellent method for adding stability for long exposure photography outdoors.

6) REMOVING AND REVERSING THE CENTER COLUMN

You may choose to remove the **Center Column** to connect another type of XC-M accessory, such as a Tilting Column Adapter or Ground Level Adapter. Or you may wish to reverse the center column to achieve a unique camera position.

Begin by removing the **Weight Hook** (see figure 4). Simply unscrew it from the bottom of the **Center Column** using the 'Lefty-loosey, righty-tighty' method. Now loosen the **Center Column Lower Lock** and slide the column out. Once removed, you can insert an accessory or you can reverse the column by sliding it back into the **Center Column Lower Lock** from the bottom side of the **Yoke**. Be sure to reconnect the **Weight Hook** when the column is reversed so it can act as a stop for the **Center Column** and prevent it from falling out of the tripod.

7) REMOVING AND MOUNTING THE HEAD

You may choose to remove the included XC-MH ball head to install a different type of head or to mount the head to a different tripod, clamp, or grip item.

Begin by extending the **Center Column** so you can access the bottom side of the **Center Column Platform**. Use the **Small Hex Key** in the included **Tool Kit** (see figure 3) to loosen the **Grub Screw** (see figure 3). It's OK to loosen the Grub Screw a few turns to ensure it is no longer making contact with the bottom of the ball head. Just be sure not to take it all of the way out since it is small and easily lost.

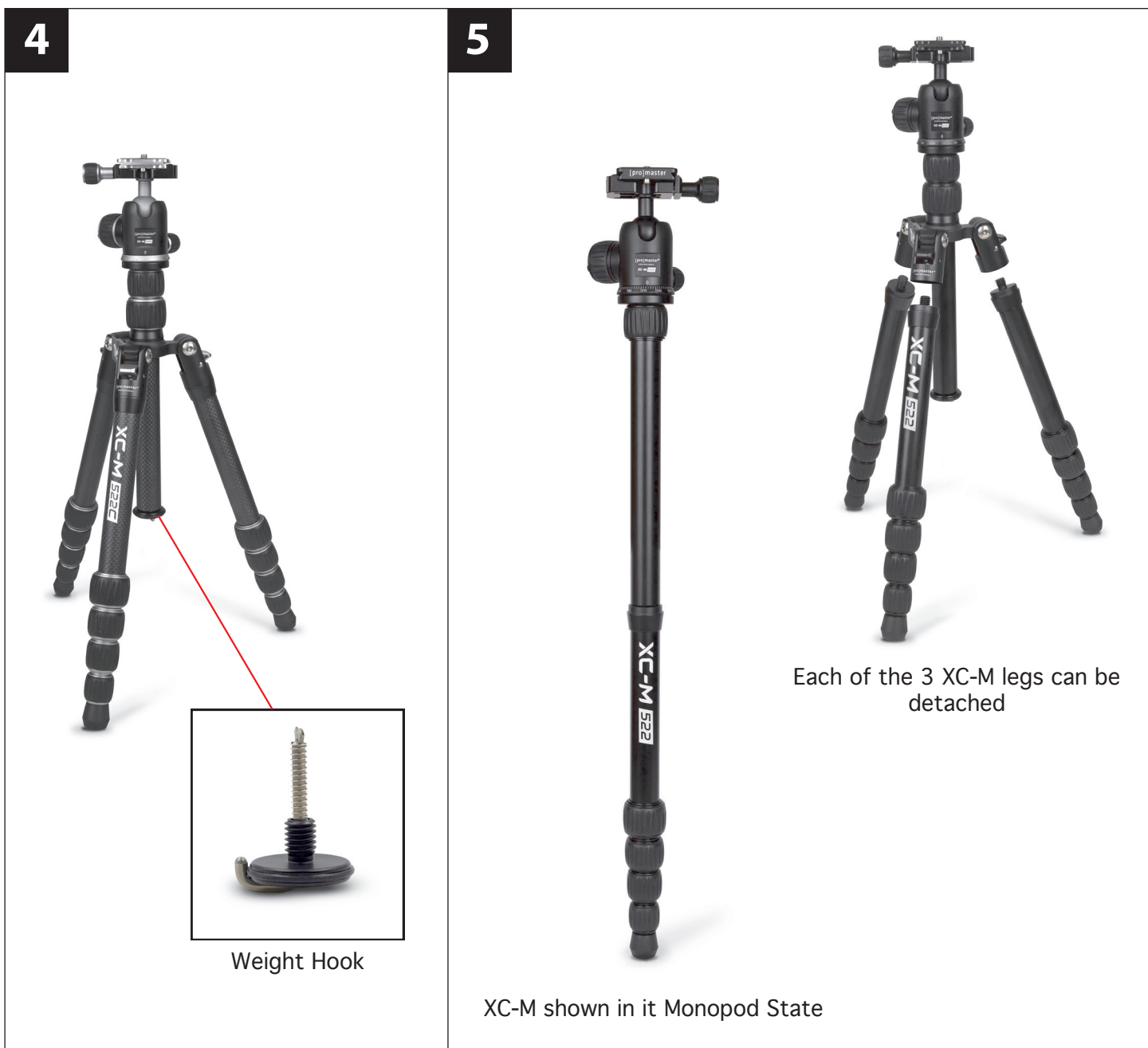
With the **Grub Screw** loose, you can now remove the Ball Head. Be sure the **Panning Knob** on the **Ball Head** is not loose, or the head will spin on its own base rather than coming off of the **Center Column Platform**. Turn the entire ball head to remove it from the rest of the tripod. Be sure you have a good hold on the head as well as the tripod so nothing falls to the ground once these two are separated.

Once the ball head is removed you will notice a special bolt in the middle of the **Center Column Platform**. If you do not see it, check the bottom of the ball head as this bolt might have come out with it instead. This **Double-sided Platform Screw** should be kept in the **Center Column Platform** and used to attach another head. It is reversible. The larger side is a 3/8"-16 thread and works with XC-M heads (and many other brands of heads). The smaller side is a 1/4"-20 thread and works with some other brands of lightweight heads. If you happen to lose, or need a replacement **Double Sided Platform Screw** for your XC-M tripod visit your friendly neighborhood ProMaster dealer and ask for product 4014.

OPERATING THE TRIPOD

8) CONVERTING TO A MONOPOD

Your XC-M tripod can quickly be converted to a monopod (see figure 5). Remove the **Weight Hook** from the bottom of the **Center Column**. Loosen the **Center Column Lower Lock** and Slide the **Center Column** out. Now remove one of the three legs from the tripod. You can choose any leg, it doesn't matter which one (see figure 5). Wrap your hand around one of the legs nears its top. Hold the rest of the tripod with your other hand. Twist the one leg to the left and it will begin to unscrew from the tripod. Continue unscrewing it until it is removed. Now connect the **Center Column** to the leg you just removed by screwing the top of the leg into the bottom of the **Center Column** using the threaded port where the **Weight Hook** normally resides. You now have a fully functional monopod.



OPERATING THE BALL HEAD

Your XC-M tripod kits includes a precision, machined, aluminum **Ball Head**. It is a double-action design, meaning there is a separate control for ball tension and another for panning. Each of these are explained below. This **Ball Head** also uses two safety bolts to prevent accidental dropping of your camera. This feature is explained in more detail in the next section titled "Attaching Your Camera".

All of the knobs on this ball head are covered in a soft, grippy material. These covers protect your fingers from direct contact with metal (particularly helpful in extremely cold weather). Their pattern and grip give you a secure hold on each control for a positive, direct feel when using each knob.

1) PANNING

The XC-M **Ball Head** has an independent base panning control along with a **Laser-Engraved Scale** around the panning base for precise rotational movements. Loosen the **Panning Knob** and you can rotate the entire head around its bases 360 degrees.

2) USING TENSION AND THE MEMORY LOCK

The large knob on the XC-M ball head is the **Tension Knob**. Inside of the **Tension Knob** is a **Memory Lock**, which is a 3-point dial on the face of the **Tension Knob**. Before using the **Tension Knob**, turn the **Memory Lock** counterclockwise until it stops. This is the **Memory Lock's** reset position. Now you can use the **Tension Knob** to loosen and tighten the ball joint within the head. Turn it counterclockwise to reduce the tension or clockwise to increase the tension. You can use the **Ball Joint** to move the camera around, including into a vertical position by placing the **Neck** of the **Ball Joint** into the U-shaped slot.

The **Memory Lock** is a special feature that allows you to set the minimum tension for the **Ball Joint**. This is handy when using a heavier camera and/or long lens which create a lot of leverage against the head. When this happens, you may not want to completely loosen the **Tension Knob** for fear of the camera and lens "dropping" on the head too quickly and risking damage. Using the **Memory Lock** is easy. Start by ensuring the lock is at its reset position by turning it counterclockwise until it stops. Tighten the **Tension Knob** by turning it clockwise. Mount your camera and lens and while holding the camera slowly loosen the **Tension Knob** by turning it counterclockwise. When you feel the tension on the **ball joint** is low enough to allow proper camera movements at the **Ball Joint** but still tight enough to prevent the camera from moving too rapidly or dropping on the ball head, turn the **Memory Lock** clockwise until it stops. You do not need to apply a lot of pressure to the **Memory Lock**. Be sure you do not overtighten it or it will not function properly. Just turn it until it stops. With the **Memory Lock** set you can now move the **Tension Knob** between this minimum tension stop and full tension quickly and easily without risk of making the ball head too loose for the weight of your camera rig.

Tip: Practice using the Memory Lock function first without a camera. Once you have mastered its use try it with a camera, after reading the section "Attaching your Camera" in this guide.

3) USING THE LEVELS

Your XC-MH Ball head has 3 levels. There are two **Line Levels** on the side, near the top and there is a **Bullseye Level** built into the QR Release Knob (see figure 6). The **Line Levels** are helpful when the camera is in either a horizontal or vertical position. The **Bullseye Level** is useful when the camera is in a vertical position and this level is facing up. Use these levels as compositional aids.



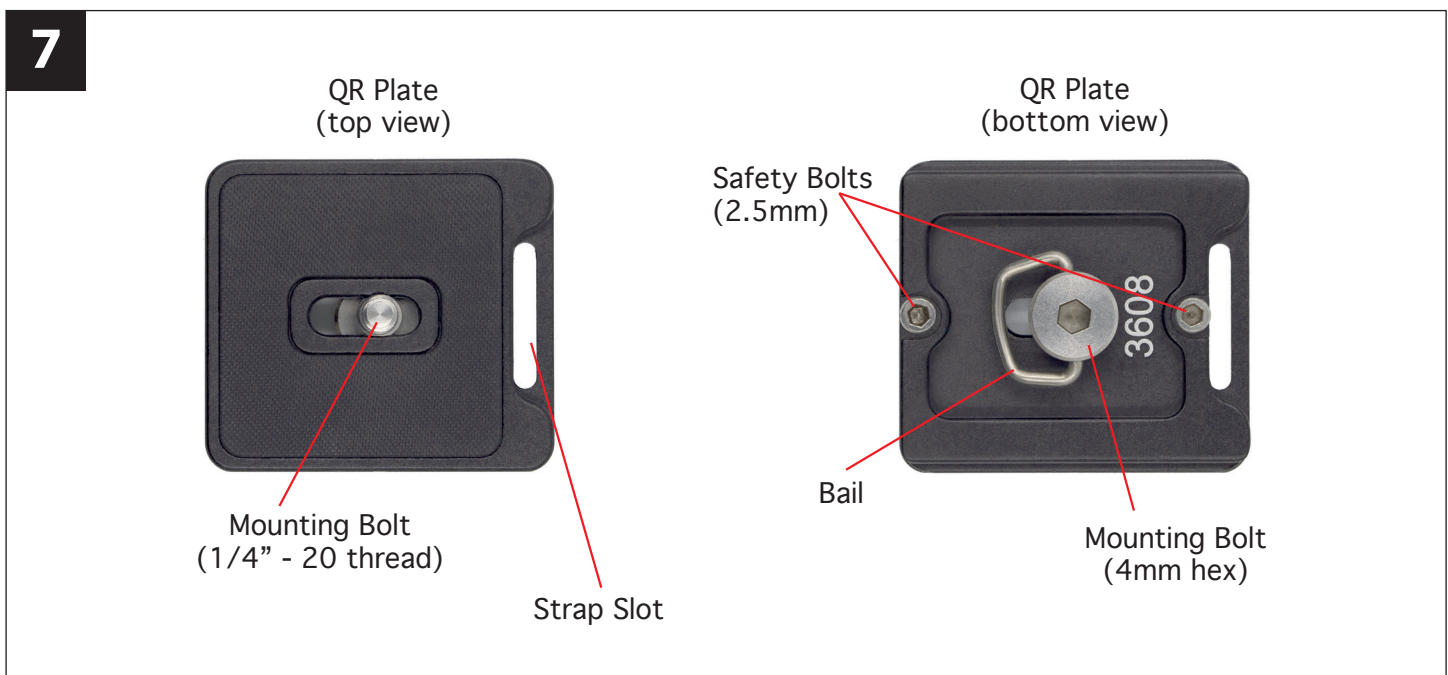
ATTACHING YOUR CAMERA

(USING THE QUICK RELEASE PLATE)

Loosen the **QR Knob** on the **Ball Head** and remove the **QR Plate**. Connect the **QR Plate** to your camera by threading its **Mounting Bolt** (see [figure 7](#)) into the tripod connection port located in the bottom of your camera (or lens). Use the **Bail** on the **Mounting Bolt** to tighten the **QR Plate** to your camera properly. You can also use the **Medium Hex Key** (included with the Tool Kit) to tighten the **Mounting Bolt**. Now place the **QR Plate** into the top of the **Ball Head** and tighten the **QR Knob** to hold it in place.

On the bottom side of the **QR Plate** you will notice two, protruding **Safety Bolts** (see [figure 7](#)). These prevent the **QR Plate** and camera from accidentally sliding off the top of the ball head if the **QR Knob** is loosened. The **Safety Bolts** can be removed using the **Small Hex Key**, if you choose. Removing the bolts will allow the **QR Plate** to slide into the top of the ball head more easily but it will remove the safety feature. Proceed at your own risk.

Note: Your XC-M QR Plate has an integrated strap slot (see [figure 7](#)). This slot is handy for connecting a grip strap or cross-body style carrying strap.



UNDERSTANDING THE MODULAR SYSTEM

Your XC-M is part of a larger, modular system. More information about all kinds of accessories for modifying and enhancing your tripod can be found at www.XC-M.promaster.com. Many of these accessories will improve your XC-M's capabilities for certain shooting situations such as macro photography, setting up in snow or sand, and more. In this section of the manual we explain a few key features of the XC-M tripod that you should understand as they relate to its modular nature.

1) REMOVABLE FEET

Your XC-M tripod has 3 high quality semi-soft **Removable Feet** which are great for general purpose use, indoors or out. Each of these feet is removable. When removed, a **Threaded Ferrule** is exposed which can be connected to other, modular accessories (see figure 8). In particular, the ProMaster 3510 All Terrain Feet can be attached for a greater range of use in challenging conditions. If you happen to lose or wear out one of the original **Removable Feet** a replacement set of feet can be purchased from any high quality ProMaster dealer. Just ask for product number 3503 if you have an XC-M 522, product number 3720 if you have an XC-M 525, or product 5176 if you have an XC-M 528 tripod.

To remove one of the **Removable Feet**, you should take hold of it and pull it away from the tripod leg as you wiggle and twist it. Removing a foot is not particularly easy! They are designed to stay on your tripod and not get lost. If you do remove them and replace them with a modular accessory, the new feet will screw into the exposed **Threaded Ferrules** at the bottom of each leg.

2) THE MD PLATE

A small quick release plate comes pre-attached to the **Yoke** of your XC-M tripod. It is called an **MD Plate**, which stands for "Mini Dovetail Plate" (see figure 9). This plate is designed for lightning fast attachment of accessories. You will need to purchase an MD Clamp (product 3573) to use the MD Plate properly. The MD Clamp can be pre-connected to accessories such as a flex arm and LED light. When you want to use the accessory you simply attach the MD Clamp to the XC-M tripod using its **MD Plate**. It takes just seconds.

The **MD Plate** is designed to remain on your tripod at all times. It adds minimal weight and is quite discrete. If you choose to remove the MD Plate the **Yoke Port** will be exposed. You should not make a habit of connecting accessories to this port as it can eventually wear out the threads and is ideally designed for use with the included MD Plate. If you should lose your MD Plate a replacement can be purchased from a ProMaster dealer. Just ask for product 3685.

3) THE STRAP SLOT

Machined into the yoke of your XC-M tripod is a convenient **Yoke Strap Slot** (see figure 10). Upon first opening the box you probably noticed the **Tool Kit** is attached to this slot. You can continue using the slot it for this purpose. The **Yoke Strap Slot** also allows for some convenient carrying methods using either the ProMaster 3580 Shoulder Strap or the ProMaster 3587 Hipster & Strap. You can connect other items to the tripod yoke using this slot as well.

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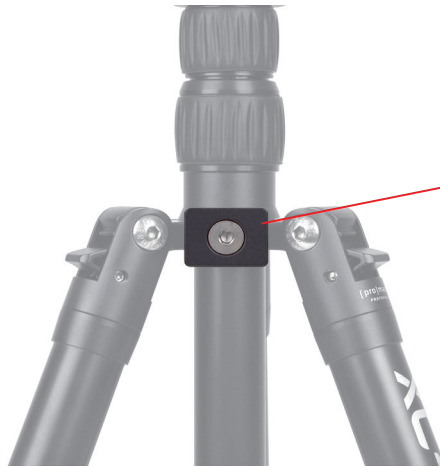


Removable Feet



Threaded Ferrule
(3/8" - 16 thread)

9



MD Plate

MD Plate front view



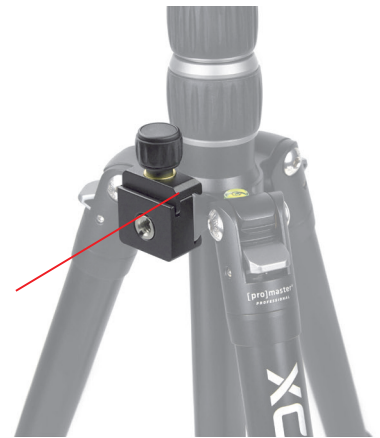
MD Plate back view



Yoke Port
(1/4" - 20 thread)



MD Clamp
(sold separately)



10



Yoke Strap Slot

TIPS FOR BEST OPERATION

1) LEAVE ROOM FOR YOUR OWN LEGS

Unless specific terrain dictates otherwise you should set up your tripod with one leg angled away from you and the other two legs directed to your left and right. This gives you room to stand and work with your camera with less chance of tripping on the tripod.

2) EXTEND THE THICKEST LEG SECTIONS FIRST

When you are using the XC-M tripod without all 5 leg sections fully extended be sure to use the largest legs first and avoid using the thinner leg sections unless necessary. In other words, work your way down from the top of each leg. Using the largest leg sections provides the greatest amount of stability because their larger diameter leg locks have more surface area to provide the maximum amount of grip and, therefore, stability. Extending the top sections first also keeps the rest of the unused sections at the bottom of each leg, closest to the ground. This forces more of the tripod's weight into a lower position which lowers its center of gravity.

3) EXTEND THE COLUMN LAST

Always use the extendable legs to achieve your desired working height first. Do not extend the column unless the legs are already fully extended and you need additional height. This creates the most stability and steadiness to your tripod setup.

4) KEEP THE YOKE LEVEL

Notice the **Bullseye Level** built into the **Yoke** of your XC-M tripod. This is a valuable tool. Before leveling the ball head and camera you should first do your best to make the **Yoke** of the tripod level during its initial setup. Use the XC-M's independent leg angle adjustments as well as the independently extendable legs to achieve this. It will ensure maximum stability before you mount your camera to the ball head.

Warning: If the yoke of the tripod is not set up level you risk having the tripod (and your camera) falling over.

5) USE THE WEIGHT HOOK

XC-M tripods are designed to be as lightweight and compact as possible for easy travel and transport. But less weight can reduce stability. Get into the habit of adding weight to your tripod using its built-in, retractable **Weight Hook**. This can add stability for steadier photographs and reduce the chance of accidentally knocking over your tripod and camera.

6) DON'T FOLD THE LEGS TRANSVERSE-STYLE WHEN IN THE FIELD

Lighting conditions can change rapidly when photographing outdoors. Being able to set up your tripod quickly can ensure you get a great shot before conditions change. To help achieve this we recommend you avoid folding your XC-M into its compact, transverse position when you are working in the field. The compact position is great for storage and transport but when you are working consider simply folding the legs in as you would with a typical non-transverse style tripod. This will let you unfold and set up the XC-M much faster.

7) TURN OFF CAMERA AND LENS STABILIZATION

Many cameras and lenses have built in stabilizing features. Stabilization is great for hand-held photography. However, some of these stabilizing systems can fail when your camera is absolutely still because the stabilizer is "looking" for motion to counteract. This means it can actually work against you and create a blurry photograph. We recommend you refer to information from your camera and lens manufacturer(s) to learn about your particular stabilizing system and find out if it should be turned OFF when using a tripod.

PARTS DIAGRAM

