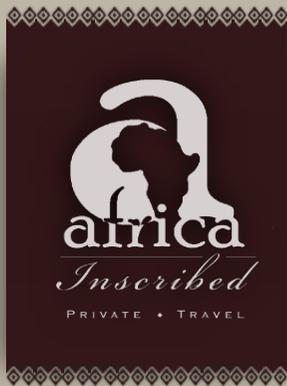




What Binoculars Should I Take On Safari?



Binoculars are a vital part of every safari, and should be considered as important as a camera or decent hat.

Most game viewing is carried out from a vehicle, and so the game will commonly be within 150 feet of the vehicle. Larger animals, birds and small animals form a main part of the wildlife seen on a safari, and birds (even for non-birders) become part of the daily list.

Many people regard binoculars as an unnecessary piece of equipment, used once and forgotten. Bino's as they become known, may be used on safari, again on the second safari, your kids safari, at the local 'ball game', on hunting & fishing trips, and for birding from the ease of your verandah.

Choosing which to have needs professional help. Let me try!

CRITERIA

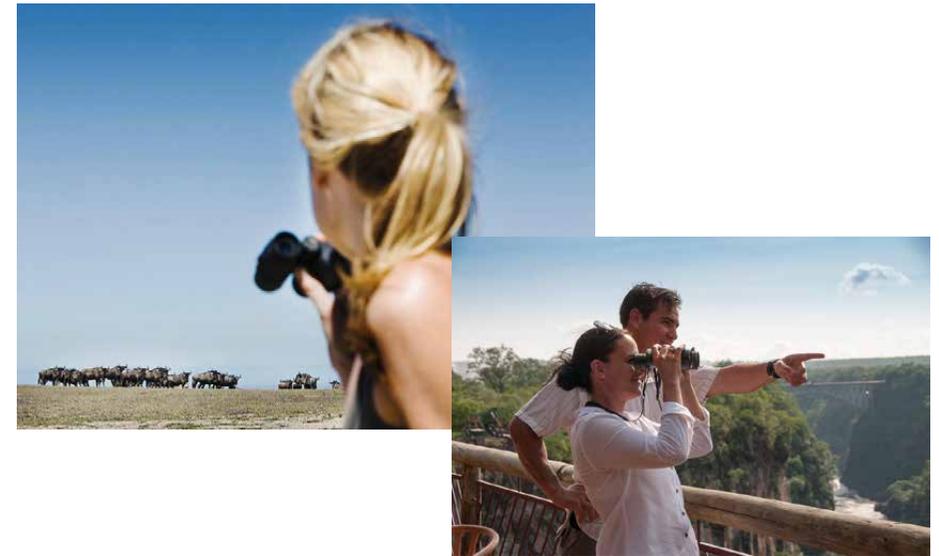
1. Special use or just this safari?
2. Weight
3. Budget
4. Who is going to use them?

Understanding Binoculars

Binoculars are a high quality item, manufactured to last many years, if used correctly. They consist of two lenses, joined to align with a persons two eyes, often with a dual focusing mechanism that focuses both lenses simultaneously. The two lenses are adjusted independently, to cater for the difference in focus between the same persons eyes. The front with an adjustable eyepiece to cater for people who have glasses and those who do not, and a focusing 'wheel' which is self explanatory, and then the rear optic which is fixed.

They are normally described by two numbers, for instance 8x42, or 8x30, or even 12x50.

The first number is the **MAGNIFICATION** of the binoculars, and the second figure is the **DIAMETER OF THE OBJECTIVE** lens. So, 8x is the magnification capability of the lens, and 42 is 42mm, the diameter of the objective lens.



BROWNELL

DISCOVER MORE



Sometimes manufacturers put a 'B' or 'GA' in the model name. 'G' stands for use by people wearing glasses, without losing field-of-view, and 'BA' indicates the binoculars are rubberized for protection.

The **FIELD OF VIEW** is the horizontal area covered by the lenses when a person looks through the binoculars over a measured distance. Categorized for example by the figures; '131m at 1000m'.

Nowadays one can purchase **VARIABLE POWER** binoculars with extra-ordinary magnification. It is my experience that these items, although they seem amazing, are not of the same quality as the typical **NON-VARIABLE** binoculars. They are fun to use at home, but generally are heavy and not for traveling with. The slide in the middle can also be weak and liable to damage during travel.

Magnification

A vital part of understanding binoculars.

When selecting binoculars, one tends to select a pair with high magnification. It depends on what you intend to use them for.

Generally, the lower power glasses the wider the Field-of-View (FOV), and the brighter the image.

For example: 7x and 8x have several positive points.

Wide FOV.

Bright image.

High definition.

Light weight.

Good Depth of Field...detail and overall focus.

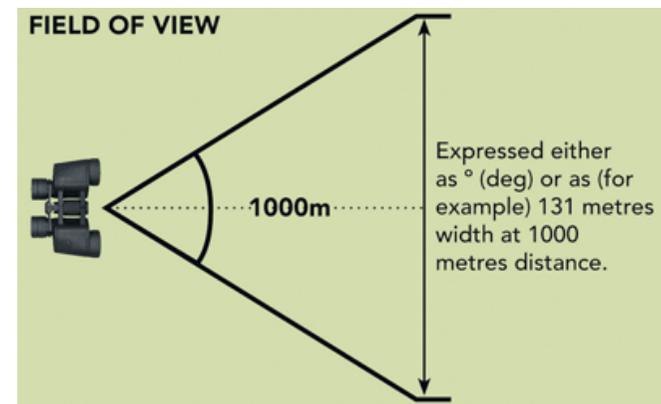
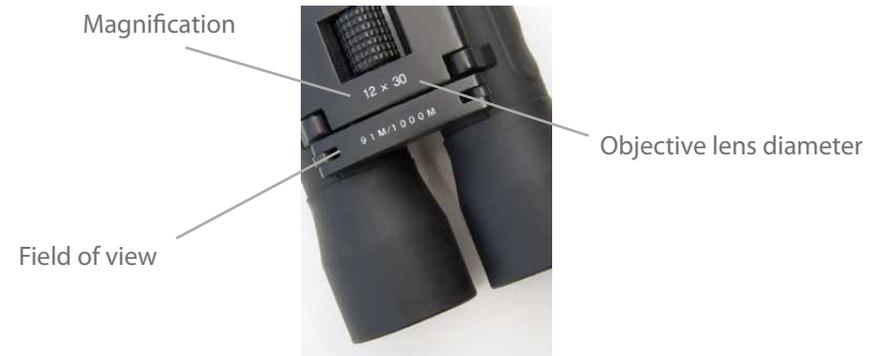
X10. Better used from a hide or static position.

Objective Lens

This is where the light enters the binoculars!

The wider the lens here the more light enters the prisms and the better the use in low light conditions, ie..one can use them in late afternoon or early evening light.

The diameter of the objective can vary from x25mm (of little use) to 75mm(Used by the Navy!), so we recommend an objective that is in the mid-range, as that is most useful and will allow a useful amount of light into the prism. This mid-range would be x40, x42 or x50mm.



Objective lens diameter



1887

BROWNELL

DISCOVER MORE



Two styles of binocular are commonly seen.

1. The angled body or porroprism which is the older style.
2. The roof prism or 'Dach' style, which is more stable, robust and 'through the lens'. This style is more expensive because more structural material and design is used.

When Choosing

Choosing a pair of binoculars is the hard part as there are so many offered. Be sure you get to see a selection of binoculars in your budget level, to ensure the best comparison.

Handle several pairs. Once they are in your hands, the feel of them will certainly help you decide which one suits you best!

For safaris, we recommend 7x40, 7x50; 8x40; 8.5x42.

10 x 42 is recommended for serious birders, those with a 'steady hand' and more sedentary use from a vehicle, a hide or on a tripod.

The small 10 x 25 binoculars, often touted as 'convenient' by sales people are of little functional use on safari as they are too small to use in a vehicle quickly and for extended periods, and the small objective limits the amount of light coming into the binocular.

Brands

There are a number of very good value brands, but the better reviews mention CELESTRON GRANITE, MINOX, NIKON, BUSHNELL, PENTAX and at the top of the pile are LEICA, LEITZ and SWAROVSKY, but these are expensive. Last year, the SWAROVISION EL 10X32 binocular was voted best safari optics in one particular English sports magazine!

Naturally your personal considerations such as budget and availability will play a bit part in the selection process.

Again, any safari to Africa is a serious investment of resources and it seems rather short-sighted to limit ones' enjoyment of the trip by not purchasing or borrowing decent equipment to facilitate getting the most out of the safari!

Have fun!

Porroprism Style



Roof Prism Style



Celestron Granite 8x42



Minox 10x44



Bushnell 8x42



Nikon 10x42



Swarovski 10x42



Leica 8x42



BROWNELL

DISCOVER MORE

