

# Using a Ball Head as a Gimbal Head

Dr John A. Allocca  
www.allocca.com  
www.DrJohnPhotography.com  
2/29/20

## Description

The size and weight of equipment becomes a major concern when backpacking and hiking for most people. A Gimbal head is great for photographing birds and astronomy because it only has a vertical or horizontal movement. Ball heads can move in almost any direction. For some types of photography, tilting the camera with a ball head may not be desirable. Gimbal heads move from side to side and up and down only. Gimbal heads range in size from large to monstrous. Ball heads range in size from small to large. One solution to the size and weight problem is to use a small ball head as a gimbal head. Ball heads are made to tilt from 90 to 0 degrees for the purpose of shooting vertically. In this configuration, the ball head is turned completely to one side. There are usually slots in the base to allow for the camera to be attached in the vertical position. If the camera is to be used in the horizontal position, use an L-bracket. If the ball head is configured to receive an Arca Swiss mount, use an L-bracket with an Arca Swiss mount. Some L-brackets are universal and some are camera specific. The L-bracket is normally used to mount a camera vertically on a horizontal head. In this article it is used for the opposite purpose. Will the ball head in this configuration work as smoothly as a gimbal head? The answer is no. The reader needs to decide which is more important, smoothness of operation or size and weight.





## Resources

### **Really Right Stuff BH-30 Ball Head with Compact Lever-Release Clamp**

15 lb Load Capacity

Max Height: 3"

Panning Base with Engraved Degree Marks

Base Diameter 1.6", Ball Diameter 1.2"

Weight 11.2 oz

\$295

### **Video Vertical Shooting L Bracket for DSLR Camera Tripod Head Quick Release Plate**

Arca Swiss Compatible with Nikon D750 D3400 D850 Z7 D7500 Sony A7iii A7ii A6500

A6000 A6300 Canon 5d Mark 80d 6d 70d

\$18