



## GEARED UP CAMP, CARRY, AND CAMERAS

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**PEAK DESIGNS P.O.V.** (\$69.95  
[peakdesignltd.com/store/capturepov](http://peakdesignltd.com/store/capturepov))  
To walk the aisles at a cycling or outdoor industry tradeshow is to marvel at the astonishing volume of accessories that have sprung up around GoPro cameras. The ubiquitous action

cam can be attached to you or your gear in nearly every conceivable fashion, but very few of these methods seems to exceed the ability of GoPro's own products. Until now. Peak Designs, a company that got its start with a couple of unique camera accessories they funded on Kickstarter, launched their P.O.V. kit earlier this year and its simplicity, functionality, and versatility make it the proverbial "killer app" for GoPro users.

An ingenious and heavy duty clip attaches to basically any size strap with the help of a stabilizing pad for thinner straps. Once tightened down on a platform of choice — a variety of front, rear and side points of view were easy to get with a bit of creativity and the straps on packs and panniers —

you just connect your GoPro or point and shoot camera to the appropriate included adaptor and slide the base plate into a slot on the attached clip. An extra stabilization screw even lets you remove tiny amount of jiggling in the connection. When you're ready for a new view, hit the release button, remove the camera, and start over.

Anyone who has messed with a GoPro and the accompanying screws and mounts in the field knows that one of the biggest challenges to using the camera is getting a grip on the four-sided molding that tightens and loosens each screw. Handlebar-mount screws always seem to rattle loose until it's time to switch to a new mount, then no amount of straining will loosen the seemingly welded screw. It's

here that Peak Designs hits perhaps its biggest home run, as the P.O.V. kit includes a small plastic wrench that's molded to fit both the small ridges on Peak's grips (though we never had a problem getting them adequately torqued by hand) and the four-sided GoPro design, making for the most hassle-free tightening and loosening of the dreaded GoPro screws I've ever encountered.

All of this clever design won't help you in the editing suite and putting together a P.O.V. video of your tour that won't bore all of YouTube to death is still a tall task, but Peak Designs provides the best starting point we've come across. —AS

### **POLAROID XS100I WIFI ACTION CAMERA** (\$179.99, polaroid.com)

Polaroid is making a splash in the ever-growing market of action video cameras. Their XS100i WiFi camera was released this past winter, and records up to HD 1080p video quality with 170 degree distortion free wide angle coverage. If you want to record smaller video files, you can also drop the video quality down to 720p for quicker uploads and online sharing. Despite weighing a scant 4.8 oz., the camera has held up well after a few drops/spills. It is also waterproof, so you can keep recording when the rain pours down.

Intuitive design is a big plus for this camera. There's just one button and a switch that operate all functions. The button handles powering off and on, and will also snap still photos. The switch turns recording on and off. Both of these are large and well labeled for easy on-the-fly operation. If you have any doubts as to whether or not you're recording, a green light indicates that the camera is powered on, but not recording. When the light is red, you're capturing all the action.

The camera's WiFi ability is something worth taking advantage of. Through this, you can pair up to

a smartphone (both iOS and Android apps are available), and control the camera settings through your phone, or even upload video to your social media outlets.

When you go to purchase a Polaroid XS100i WiFi, you're pretty well stocked with accessories out of the box. Included are a helmet mount, handlebar mount, and a carrying pouch. The only key accessory that is not included is a microSD card, which you will need to record your video. My favorite feature that is often overlooked by many action cameras is a built-in tripod mount for shooting shake free video off the bike. —JT

### **BIOLITE CAMPSTOVE** (\$130, biolitestove.com/products/campstove)

There are many camp stoves on the market but there's only one that I know of that requires no bottled or liquid fuel and converts the heat created from burning material into energy that can be used to charge gadgets and gizmos. Yes, you read that correctly. It really is pretty ingenious.

The CampStove consists of two pieces: the cooking chamber and the power pack. When the two are mated together, the CampStove weighs 33 oz., so it's no lightweight, but it sure is handy and simple to use. You simply mate the two pieces together and extend the three feet, which makes the stove very stable. You then add dry tinder or fire starter, which is included, into the cooking chamber and set it alight. Once it gets started, you turn the built-in fan to the low setting and let the fire burn hotter as you add more fuel. It's much like building a regular campfire: you want to place the dry tinder or fire starter in loose formation so air can flow and then continue to add fuel accordingly so as not to smother your handiwork. Once the fire is ready for larger pieces of fuel, you can ramp the fan up to high and let it rip. And it will burn just about any kind of dry biomass.

It took me about 10 minutes to get a healthy fire going. Once I did, I was able to boil 12 oz. of water in about 3 minutes. Meanwhile, the power pack is converting the heat from the fire into electricity via a thermoelectric generator which then runs the fans and stores additional energy to power USB gizmos.

With the power pack stored inside the cooking chamber, its dimensions are 8.25 x 5 in. When assembled, it's 8.25 x 7.5 in. If you're still skeptical, BioLite's website explains the CampStove very well and there's a video which shows it in action. —MD

### **KLYMIT INERTIA X FRAME** (\$90, klymit.com/index.php/inertia-x-frame.html, 888-559-6481)

Whether you're road touring or bikepacking (or packbiking!), you probably want to travel as light as possible and the Inertia X Frame camping pad will certainly help in that regard. At 9 oz., it's the lightest full-size pad I've used. The main reason it's so light is that it features a minimalist body map design. In other words, there are cut-out regions so that the pad doesn't have a solid surface while still providing support in the key pressure zones where it's essential. These cut-out regions also allow the insulation in the bottom of your sleeping bag to remain lofted instead of becoming compacted, a state in which it is least efficient. You can use the X Frame inside or outside your sleeping bag, but I prefer it inside. Because it's not solid, it requires a lot less air to inflate so blowing it up is a snap, plus it comes with a minimalist bulb hand pump which allows you to pressurize it even more once you've sealed off the mouth valve. And deflating is even easier.

The X Frame is constructed of 30 denier material on top and 75 denier on the bottom. Fully inflated, it's 72 x 18 x 1.5 in. and when packed I got it down to 3 x 5 in. Video and full specs are available online. —MD

## MOUNTAINSMITH BIKE CUBE

**DELUXE** (\$80, [mountainsmith.com/index.php/activities/biking/bike-cube-deluxe.html](http://mountainsmith.com/index.php/activities/biking/bike-cube-deluxe.html), 800-551-5889)

If you're anything like me, the organization of "stuff" is not your strong suit. Seems like whatever I'm looking for is somewhere other than where I'm looking for it. To help organize my gear and keep it in one place, I've found the Bike Cube Deluxe to be invaluable. It features tri-panel access, meaning it has three main compartments, one of which has a zippered mesh pocket and another has two open-top mesh compartments, one of which has three sections while the other has two.

You'll also find inside a fleece-lined compartment for sunglasses, a roll-up tool organizer, and a removable padded changing mat, and it offers specific storage spaces for a helmet and shoes. And there are two ways to carry it, by the handle at the top or by the adjustable shoulder strap. You name it, there's a place for it in the Bike Cube Deluxe.

And if you think you might need even more storage and organizational capacity, the Bike Cube Deluxe works in conjunction with MountainSmith's Modular Hauler Systems. —MD

## SALSA ANYTHING CAGE

(\$30, [salsacycles.com/components/category/accessories/anything\\_cage](http://salsacycles.com/components/category/accessories/anything_cage), 877-668-6223)

If you find you've got a spare water bottle mount on your bike or use a hydration pack, you can make use of that mount to carry other items with the Anything Cage. It mounts like a regular water bottle cage but at 8 x 5.25 in., you can carry a variety of roundish objects in it, like a lightweight sleeping bag, shelter, or camping pad. Of course, you can also carry more water in a Nalgene bottle, coffee in a thermos, or just about anything. Whatever you decide to carry in the cage, it'll be secured with two nylon straps, and Salsa recommends not carrying anything heavier than 6.6 lbs. Together, the cage and straps weigh in at 120 grams. And don't forget, you can find the Anything Cage at [adventurecycling.org/cyclosource-store](http://adventurecycling.org/cyclosource-store) or by calling (800)-721-8719. —MD



## X-FUSION HILO 100

(\$200, [xfusionshox.com](http://xfusionshox.com))  
No longer only found in the world of downhill sleds and \$10,000 all-mountain machines, the dropper seatpost has become practically standard equipment in the mountain bike world, and with good reason.

But despite the obvious upsides, droppers have been hindered by reliability issues, high prices and – for bikepackers who love their older steel frames – limited seatpost sizes. To cram complicated internals into the posts, manufacturers have largely stuck to the bigger 30.9 and 31.6 mm diameters. At last, though, a few posts in the old 27.2 mm standard have started to come along, including the budget-friendly Hilo 100 from X-Fusion.

The Hilo 100 uses a hydraulic mechanism and air pressure to provide 100 mm of travel actuated by either a bar-mounted remote or a lever underneath the saddle. We tested the remote version and found installation to be straightforward out of the box and any questions were answered either in

the included literature or online.

Once on the bike, the Hilo has been a consistent performer with trouble-free operation and virtually no play in the post – a common achilles heel for droppers. The adjustment is infinite anywhere along the Hilo's 100mm of travel.

There are some potential downsides for bikepackers. First, as with any dropper post, it's one more control to have mounted on the handlebars. And unless you are running a 1 x drivetrain without a front shifter, the lever will have to be mounted above the bar. The other issue is rear tire clearance if you have a saddle-mounted bag onboard, as dropping 100 mm can cause the bag to rub or even bind on the rear tread.

Those potential inconveniences aside, for certain off road adventures a dropper post can completely transform the way you ride, and X-Fusion's Hilo offers a way to do it on older frames and at a comparatively budget price point.

—AS **AG**