



Light Stands



How-to hold your lighting In the studio Or out on location

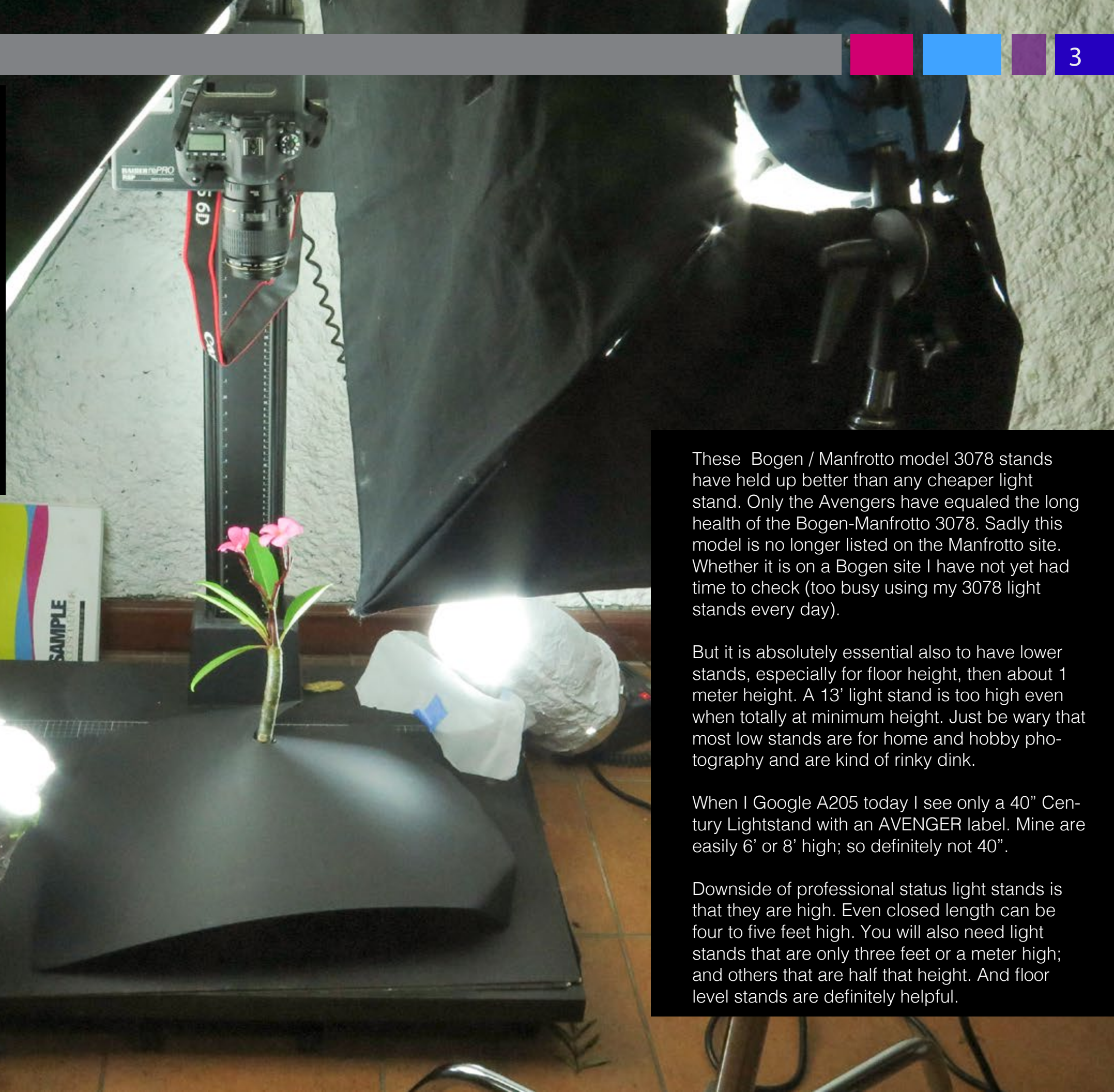
What about light stands?

For outside, the main headache about standard light stands is they expect a perfectly flat floor. These are NOT tripods; their legs are NOT able to raise or lower whatsoever.

- Bogen (Manfrotto) 3078. These are 13' high
- Avenger stands, A205 and A255

We never have casters (wheels) on any of our stands (we have survived 40+ years of studio photography without wheels).

Our model 3078 stands are 13' high, and YES, you do want them high enough. Lower stands tend to be a tad informal. A higher stand tends to be more sturdy, so are better even if you don't raise them up all the time.



These Bogen / Manfrotto model 3078 stands have held up better than any cheaper light stand. Only the Avengers have equaled the long health of the Bogen-Manfrotto 3078. Sadly this model is no longer listed on the Manfrotto site. Whether it is on a Bogen site I have not yet had time to check (too busy using my 3078 light stands every day).

But it is absolutely essential also to have lower stands, especially for floor height, then about 1 meter height. A 13' light stand is too high even when totally at minimum height. Just be wary that most low stands are for home and hobby photography and are kind of rinky dink.

When I Google A205 today I see only a 40" Century Lightstand with an AVENGER label. Mine are easily 6' or 8' high; so definitely not 40".

Downside of professional status light stands is that they are high. Even closed length can be four to five feet high. You will also need light stands that are only three feet or a meter high; and others that are half that height. And floor level stands are definitely helpful.

What light stands would I wish to feature today?

- Avenger A450, Mighty Baby Stand (two would be needed)
- Avenger A215S, 40" Sliding Leg Century Stand
- Avenger A256S, 20" Sliding Leg Century Stand
- Avenger A280S, 20" Mini Base Century Stand (because min height is 33")
- Avenger A268S Mini Turtle base with A75S 20" double Riser Column (min height 27")

The above catalog numbers are from the US web site of SMS Productions. The numbers below are from the Italian corporate site for Avenger

- Avenger A2018L (C-stand 18 sliding leg)
- Avenger A2025L (C-stand 25 sliding leg) (it is essential to have a good range of sizes; don't have all your light stands the identical height).
- Avenger A2033L (C-Stand 33 sliding leg)

The web site of SMS Productions shows the Avenger light stands in a more easy-to-use manner than the European corporate web site. The SMS site has the missing info that you need to make a decision: www.SMSprod.com

If I had more space in my studio, and if I did commercial photography, I would need a boom stand. But most of our photography is for our own publications; we rarely sell our photos (though National Geographic did ask for about 500 photos). We rarely do commercial photography (though we did a successful project for a Japanese coffee-table book photographer)..

I never thread anything to the top, so the kind of male, female, top has not been crucial for me. But if you do other kinds of photography, or have lamps that need a male or female or 5/8th thread, better be sure you have the appropriate top size and shape.

I have never noticed the Avenger A450, Mighty Baby Stand but it looks great; precisely what is needed for photographing things on the floor or on the ground outside.

Useful tips: <http://strobist.blogspot.com/2012/05/q-c-stands.html>



What about other brands?

One web site suggests Kupo light stands. I have attended Photokina since 1998 and if anything with a Kupo brand name was exhibited their PR department blew it for fourteen years! I know Avenger and Matthews; but sorry, never have noticed Kupo.

Avenger and Matthews have many light stands which appear practically identical; even same name "C-stand" (Century stand). But I have only Avenger light stands; nothing from Matthews). I am fully content with my Avenger stands. They are probably over 20+ years old and work just fine. But we have no very low stands from Avenger; we have no really high light stands. And we have no Avenger stand with moveable leg.

True, these are heavy (that's why they are good).

But, they do fold down for packing and travel (I must admit I never try to take them on a plane; but for field trips, yes, I do take them in a van if I feel I need their advantage once I get to the location for photography: their supports can stand on top of each other in a crowded leg-situation: you cannot have a forest of three-legged light stands anywhere near each other if they have the normal diagonal supports!

Light stands for outside, out on location

If you lack light stands with legs which can be raised or lowered, you will need to photograph on flat ground (or use a really sturdy tripod to hold your lights).

Just realize that most tripods do not have a top fixture that a tungsten or fluorescent light fixture will fit onto!

We have a separate FLAAR Report on the kinds of light stands which we recommend for using outside, out on location.



Here are the front covers of FLAAR Reports on photography of plants and animals.



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