

Infinity Stops

Tiny and seldom used, the infinity stop on your large format camera can save you time and allow a quick setup.

If your camera doesn't have infinity stops almost as good is a Sharpie® marker or similar fine point marker to indicate where to place your standard for a given lens. Or, if you don't mind taking along a tape measure, then simply place the lens one focal length from the ground glass plane (*e.g.*, 135mm for a 135mm lens). That should be close enough for the infinity focus unless you are using a telephoto lens (in which case try a shorter length).

Here is the way it works: A field camera gets folded and unfolded several times whenever you are out taking pictures. If you don't know where to set the lens standard, you can spend several minutes, or longer, hunting for the focus point.

First find the infinity stop and figure out what type of driver or wrench you will need to set it. You can do this at home, and it only needs to be done once for each lens. A Toyo 45 uses a tiny hex wrench .050

Now rack your bed back, and pull the front standard to the approximate distance you need using a tape measure. Just remember that extending the bellows focuses closer, and shortening the bellows focuses further. Now tilt the stop up, and push it against the standard and tighten it down. Move the standard back if you need to gain access to the set screws. Tilt the stop down to let the front standard move over the stop.

Next time you are in the field simply pull the standard against the stop, and you are focused at infinity. Don't hesitate to experiment and adjust as you gain experience, but this gives you a fast way to set up and take a shot – very useful if you have an impatient companion or if the light is changing.

