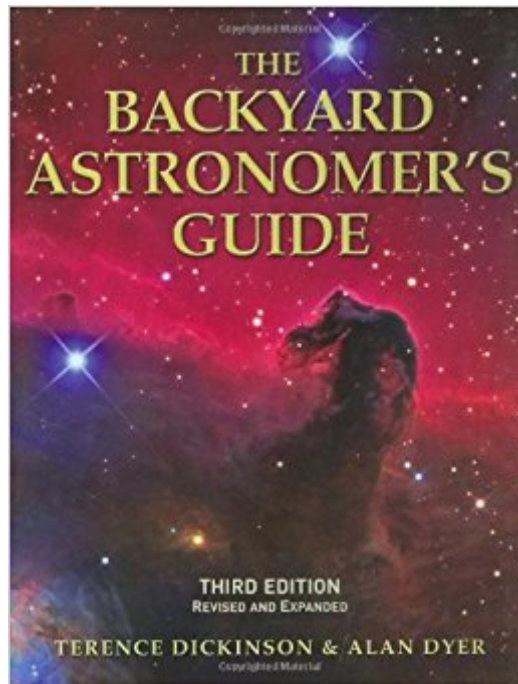




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# The Backyard Astronomer's Guide



## Synopsis

The modern classic, completely updated. The newest edition of *The Backyard Astronomer's Guide* includes the latest data and answers the questions most often asked by home astronomers, from beginners to experienced stargazers. Terence Dickinson and Alan Dyer provide expert guidance on the right types of telescopes and other equipment; photographing the stars through a telescope; and star charts, software and other references. They cover daytime and twilight observing, planetary and deep-sky observing, and much more. With over 500 color photographs and illustrations, *The Backyard Astronomer's Guide* is one of the most valuable, beautiful and user-friendly astronomy books ever produced. New and updated for this edition: A 20-page full-color Atlas of the Milky Way provides location and context for hundreds of celestial objects mentioned throughout the book. A chapter on Astrophotography with Digital Cameras specifies what equipment works best and how to use it to collect a color gallery of celestial portraits. *Telescopes for Recreational Astronomy* features assessments of a wide range of new telescopes, from models for beginners to those for veteran astronomy enthusiasts, with special emphasis on computerized telescopes and how they work. *Accessory Catalog* spotlights the best of the accessories and flags the frivolous and irrelevant. Three practical appendices: *Polar Aligning Your Telescope*; *Optics Cleaning and Collimation*; *Testing Your Telescope Optics*. Any serious home astronomer must have this superb guide as an ongoing reference.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

[Review of earlier edition:] I highly recommend this volume for most amateur astronomers and all libraries. I wish I had read it before I purchased my first telescope. (John O. Christensen Science Books and Films 2003-10-15)[Review of earlier edition:] More than any other guide to backyard observing, this excellent book focuses on equipment. (Astronomy)[Review of earlier edition:] Excellent introductory text ... completely revised... it is lushly illustrated in color throughout. (Ursula Ellis E-Streams, Vol. 6, No. 4)[Review of earlier edition:] If an amateur astronomer could afford one book, this would be the one to get ... one of the most attractive practical astronomy works ever produced. (Russ Francis Monday Magazine)[Review of earlier edition:] Lively, accessible style; is comprehensive; and is lavishly illustrated with hundreds of photographs, diagrams, and charts... highly recommended for any library. (Mark Wilson American Reference Books Annual, Volume 35)[Review of earlier edition:] Few books capture the spirit of the hobby so well -- the pleasures and the pitfalls of the equipment you might need, and the simple joy of watching the universe go by. (American Scientist)[Review of earlier edition:] This all-encompassing reference provides practical advice. (Science News 2003-01-04)[Review of earlier edition:] Recommended for all libraries and for experienced or inexperienced amateur astronomers. (A.R. Upgren Choice)[Review of earlier edition:] Big colorful user-friendly book ... I recommend this book for anyone who is contemplating buying a telescope, has one but does not quite know how to use it, or wants to learn more about accessories and fun activities to supplement his or her stargazing. If you teach observational astronomy, run a public observatory, or conduct community stargazing classes, put this magazine down and order it right now ... This book is your passport to the stars. (David Aguilar Sky and Telescope)[Review of earlier edition:] This book is an indispensable tool for any serious naturalist who wants to understand and experience the full expanse of the world and universe around us. (Pierre R. Gauthier Canadian Camera)[Review of earlier edition:] Its nontechnical language makes astronomy an avocation accessible to everyone. (Library Journal 2003-05-01)[Review of earlier edition:] Crammed with practical information that should help you become a better observer, and have fun doing it. (Craig Tupper Astronomy)[Review of earlier edition:] Besides its practical benefits, this book is a real treat for the eyes. It's loaded with colorful photographs, graphics and information boxes. (John McPhee Halifax Chronicle-Herald 2003-02-01)With over 500 color photographs and illustrations, this book is a valuable, beautiful and user-friendly astronomy reference. (Lunar and Planetary Information Bulletin)A magnificently illustrated and superb guide to astronomy is contained in the newest edition of The Backyard Astronomer's Guide.... Overall, this title is a beautiful and informative resource for the amateur astronomer, both the beginner and the

experienced. (Denise A. Garofalo American Reference Book Annual) I fondly remember haunting my favorite bookstore as a college student in the early 1990s, ogling the big, full-color astronomy texts, when I happened upon *The Backyard Astronomer's Guide*. It wasn't as flashy as the other books, but I was quickly taken by its practical information, covering all the subjects I was interested in as a fledgling amateur. Now in its third edition, Terence Dickinson and Alan Dyer have completely rewritten large sections to keep in lockstep with the evolving trends. Like an old friend who has grown wiser over time, this compendium has become better with age. It's good-looking too--though chock-full of useful information, none of the full-color layouts appear cramped or confused. Immediately from the first chapter the authors' fluid writing style draws you in, casually introducing you to the pursuit of the night sky. As in previous editions, the flow comfortably builds with each page, easing you into progressively challenging subjects without missing a step. The text builds through each successive chapter, describing today's plethora of binoculars, telescopes, mounts, eyepieces, and other accessories. We then move on to delve deeply into everything of interest in the sky, from the planets to deep-sky objects. The detailed yet accessible explanation of celestial mechanics should be required reading for everyone. The third part introduces digital astrophotography. Yes, digital--it starts out by stating that film is dead. This new section covers everything you need to get started taking pictures, including some useful parts of Adobe Photoshop. *The Backyard Astronomer's Guide* closes with a set of beautifully rendered charts of the Milky Way by Glenn LeDrew. Opposing pages display a color version and a labeled, black-on-white version plotted to magnitude 9. Dickinson and Dyer have brought their excellent guide further into the 21st century. I can't recommend it highly enough. (Sean Walker Sky and Telescope 2009-04-01) Dickinson and Dyer provide considerable information that amateur astronomers will appreciate... Complementing the informative text are hundreds of colour photographs and illustrations as well as a 20-page, full-colour atlas of the Milky Way that includes 10 charts. This revised and expanded third edition will be of interest to serious amateur astronomers. (Glenn Perrett Simcoe.com 2010-10-02) *The Backyard Astronomer's Guide* continues to impress, offering a little something for everyone. If you have never seen this book before, now is the time to add it to your collection. It is one book you will never tire of opening, always finding something of interest in the world of astronomy. (Shelf Life)

Terence Dickinson is the author of *Night Watch* and 13 other astronomy books, among them *The Universe and Beyond*, *Summer Stargazing* and *Exploring the Night Sky*. He is also editor of *SkyNews*. Alan Dyer is program producer at the Calgary Science Centre Planetarium and a

contributing editor to Sky and Telescope magazine. An authority on commercial telescopes, his reviews of astronomical equipment appear regularly in major astronomy magazines.

This book saves time and money. Realistic on information and accurate on assumption. To buying that perfect scope or bino, I found, "these fellas know what they are talkin about! From accessories to photography, and in between. I don't know them and I'm not affiliated with them whatsoever. You go threw this informative book and you'll see what I'm saying. With this somewhat short synopsis, I'm glad I purchased it and I know You will be to. That is, if you really listen to what they wrote. Too many people think they need the biggest and the best with unrealistic expectations and only end up with disappointment. With this I mean your not going to get "Hubble telescope views with the best amateur telescope sold". This book points this out perfectly. I'm glad I purchased it!! Oh did I mention I'm still the night owl looking at the past, with every star/dso/ nebula/and any and all fuzzy light patches and ad infinitum, with any clear night that gives me that chance! This book is definitely the book that gave me the stepping stones to get back to a passionate hobby, and I know with certainty, if your interest is like mine, it'll be of great source to you to!

I bought this for my 16 year old grandson. He is in 11th grade & is interested in this topic. He really liked the book. I got it because after reviewing other books it seemed to have good information that was easy to understand, accompanied with really awesome pictures. Other books I looked at were too technical without being fun to read & in fact were very boring in the way they were written. The great pictures help a lot versus those that were just to technical. To capture a beginners attention I believe this is the book. It's for experienced people too but I'm not able to speak on that topic. From a beginners point of view, this book is well organized, attention getting and makes learning interesting & even fun.

This is a terrific book for the beginning to amateur astronomer contemplating getting more serious with the hobby. It offers a solid, broad overview of the nature of amateur astronomy, the options available for getting started, as well as tips on what to look for and what to avoid when assembling an observing rig. Although not nearly as detailed as Sidgwick's classic Amateur Astronomer's Handbook, Dickinson & Dyer fill a valuable niche. I would recommend pairing it with Dickinson's beginning observer's guide, Nightwatch.

Absolutely GREAT! For someone just starting out in amateur astronomy, I don't think you could find

a better information source. I bought this after having read "Nightwatch". They compliment each other perfectly!

You should add this to your shelf, for it's filled with lavish details about every aspect of astronomy. The chapters on purchasing a telescope are worth their weight in gold! Well worth the purchase price for this lovely hard cover book. Highly recommended.

I had read and heard that this book is the definitive source for backyard astronomy, and boy, were they right! Absolutely top-notch in every way. Very comprehensive, with tons of information about how the sky works, what's up there, and what equipment you need to have and how to use it. Helpfully, they "name names" and make specific suggestions for equipment to buy and equipment to avoid. Be sure to get the THIRD EDITION (2008), as lots has changed in the field of viewing equipment since the prior releases. It's a no-brainer - buy this book.

I am not new to backyard astronomy but I have been away from it for many years and everything has changed since so I consider myself a beginner. I purchased several books to help me decide what type of telescope to purchase, of course no book should tell you to buy a specific scope but should arm you with enough information to be able to go ask the right questions when you go to buy a telescope. This book does that better than any other I have seen or read. It is written in a very conversational way that does not intimidate you with too much jargon that only seasoned astronomers understand. It is very complete in that it covers everything from first time purchases to proper use and most important - how to navigate the sky enough to get a good start with minimal frustration. They do tell you what to avoid and what are traditionally good bargains. The recommendations are very logical and straight forward. If you think you know what type of telescope to buy read this first, you may come away with options you had not considered. I am interested in astrophotography having done a fair amount of professional photography in motorsports I have a solid understanding but this is quite a bit different in many ways and the choice of scope makes a difference as well. This book really has been very helpful and will continue to be a good resource for some time. I suggest that you buy this book as this version was printed in 2010 so the info is still very relevant - most other books are a bit older and the technology is much better than just a few years ago - this book is current - a big plus if you are looking to buy a new scope. Well worth the price and highly recommended.

Great addition to my library. Still plenty of information that is new to me too. Highly recommended whatever your experience level.

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