

# MAKING LIFE MORE FUN

## Tips On Seeing Stars In Your Backyard

(NAPSA)—There's an easy, fun and educational activity the whole family can enjoy and it can be as close as your backyard: stargazing. People have been fascinated by the night sky since humankind's first days. Now, in the 21st century, more and more people are turning this fascination into an exciting hobby—not only professionals but also serious amateur astronomers and space enthusiasts, young and old.

Here are some tips to help you get the most from your viewings:

- Observe outside, on the ground. Window glass distorts the view in ways that you barely notice normally, but can make a big difference in what you see. If you're in a building, vibrations from people walking can affect accuracy.

- Try to observe away from city lights, which will drown out all but the brightest astronomical objects.

- Check the weather before you start. A clear sky is obviously important—although it doesn't have to be cloudless—but so is still air.

- If you can, try to go out with more experienced observers at first. They can help show you where to look—not all patches of sky are created equal—and explain what you're seeing. Science museums and planetariums often have programs for beginners.



**Use an atlas or other guide to find objects in the night sky.**

- A star atlas can be helpful in finding planets and other celestial objects, and identifying what you've found. A less cumbersome option is a portable, handheld, personal planetarium, celestial-viewing device called the SkyScout that can instantly identify and locate over 6,000 celestial objects viewable to the naked eye. It combines GPS technology, software that calculates the position of the objects for that moment and three axis sensors that measure gravitational and magnetic fields to determine their true orientation to the earth.

The SkyScout also lets you connect to a computer to record your findings and download additional educational lessons and sky tours.

Learn more at [www.celestron.com/skyscout/](http://www.celestron.com/skyscout/).