



STARGAZING ETIQUETTE

COLORADO PLATEAU DARK SKY COOPERATIVE










OVERVIEW

Stargazing has been a human pastime for centuries and today star parties, astronomy festivals, night hikes, constellation tours, night sky photography workshops, and other astronomy-based events and activities provide excellent opportunities to celebrate the cosmos together. Whether it is your first time attending an astronomy event or you consider yourself a star party veteran, stargazing etiquette is critical to ensuring that everyone has a safe and relaxing good time.








This brief provides a general list of what to do and what to avoid when attending an astronomy event.

This is not meant to be a comprehensive list and we encourage you to do your own research before attending an event. Most importantly always be courteous, avoid creating unnecessary light and noise pollution, and remember to have fun!

DO

-  **DO** come prepared with everything you will need such as warm clothes, fresh batteries, snacks, a first aid kit, driving directions, a full tank of gas, cash or credit cards, something to sit on, headlamps, etc. Keep items where you can access them easily and where they will not be a tripping hazard.
-  **DO** familiarize yourself with event guidelines and location regulations prior to arrival. All events are different.
-  **DO** assume that anyone you meet on the observing field is a serious observer and treat them with respect.
-  **DO** use dim red lights after sundown and use only the minimum light necessary for safety. If you must use lights, ask first to avoid spoiling someone else's experience or photograph.
-  **DO** turn your phone off when in the observing area or set your device to "night mode" and keep it pointed away from other people's eyes. To take a picture, turn off the flash first.
-  **DO** use regular beam headlights and avoid high beams. Park facing towards the exit and away from observers where possible. If you need to leave early let others know.
-  **DO** have fun and always be courteous and mindful of others!

AVOID

-  **AVOID** bringing small children or pets to an event unless it is appropriate for them to attend. Generally, smoking and alcohol are not allowed during observing hours unless stated otherwise.
-  **AVOID** setting up too close to another observer. When in doubt ask, "Is it OK if I set up here?" Always respect others' social distancing preferences.
-  **AVOID** monopolizing another person's time. Generally, the astronomers are there to enjoy the sky, not give lessons unless the event is specifically educational.
-  **AVOID** tripping on cords or wires from telescopes by always being aware of your surroundings and watching your step.
-  **AVOID** creating distracting sounds, using noisy equipment, or blasting loud music. Minimize chatting when telescope owners or stargazing guides are providing information.
-  **AVOID** electronically locking your car if it causes your lights to flash or horn to honk. Put your keys in a place where you won't inadvertently activate the locks or set off your car alarm.
-  **AVOID** using green laser pointers unless by permission of the event coordinator. Never point lasers at people.



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DARK SKIES TOPICS BRIEFS

RESOURCES

Saguaro Astronomy Club Stargazing Etiquette

<https://www.saguaroastro.org/star-party-etiquette/>

Rose City Astronomers Observing Best Practices and Stargazing Etiquette

<https://www.rosecityastronomers.net/observing-best-practices>

Bill Arnett Star Party Etiquette

<http://arnett.us.com/psc/etiquette.html>

San Jose Astronomical Association Etiquette for Public Star Parties

<https://www.sjaa.net/learnresources/etiquette/>

Texas Star Party Rules

<https://texasstarparty.org/important-rules/>

Okie-Tex Star Party Etiquette

http://www.okie-tex.com/party_etiquette.php

KAS Star Party Rules:

<https://www.kasonline.org/observing.html>

Star Party List

<https://skyandtelescope.org/astronomy-resources/annual-stargazing-events/>

National Parks Leave No Trace Guidelines

<https://www.nps.gov/articles/leave-no-trace-seven-principles.htm>

Light Painting Guidelines

<https://www.nationalparksatnight.com/blog/2018/11/3/five-questions-light-painting-in-national-parks>

Dead Horse Park Brochure:

https://stateparks.utah.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/13/2019/11/Dark-Sky-Brochure_Dead-Horse-Point_5-26-2016_PRINT-revised.pdf

SPECIAL THANKS TO

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