



Guidelines for Star Parties

If your school or organization is interested in hosting a Star Party and would like our volunteer members of the Brevard Astronomical Society (BAS) to provide telescopes and knowledge, please review these guidelines and complete the Star Party Request form on our website.

Considerations on Scheduling

- The best evening to have a Star Party is before or near the first quarter moon phase. The Moon is interesting to view but does not wash out stars in the rest of the sky.
- The worst evening to have a Star Party is near a full moon. It's harder to see details on the Moon and the bright Moon will wash out visibility of all but the very brightest stars.
- Schedule the start of the Star Party around sunset or 30 minutes after. The sky will be dark enough after dusk to see stars, planets (if visible) and clusters and nebula.
- Wintertime (after daylight savings time end and before it begins) are the best months to schedule a Star Party. Sunsets are earlier and summer months are impacted by late sunsets, weather, excessive mosquitos, and other bugs.

Considerations on Location

- Try to keep the setup and viewing location away from streetlights and other bright white lights.
- Open sky is best, especially to the east, south and west. Many nearby trees block what can be seen in the sky.
- Encourage the use of red flashlights and lighting when you are in an observing area.
- Encourage your attendees to wear appropriate seasonal clothing and bring and use bug spray as needed.

Star Party Etiquette

Remember, the telescopes used are privately owned and provided by BAS volunteers. Never touch anyone else's equipment without permission. Never touch any glass optical surface. It's OK to ask what parts you can touch.

Watch your step (but don't use a flashlight). Be especially careful of power wires on the ground.



Guidelines for Star Parties

Please, no loud and boisterous behavior. Children are enthusiastic, but parents and teachers are responsible for maintaining a safe and positive learning environment.

Please, no pets, however service dogs are fine. If a pet must attend, make sure the pet is on a leash and under control.

If your event provides food and beverages, food and drinks should be kept away from telescopes. If alcohol is served, drinks should be consumed away from the viewing area. Hosts are responsible for dealing with any inebriated individuals.

Please no flash for either cameras or cellphones. The flash can be disorienting and risk the safety of others moving around in the dark.

BAS volunteers are always willing to serve as an educational resource for the public and schools by providing information and expertise on the hobby and science of astronomy. We look forward having a successful event.