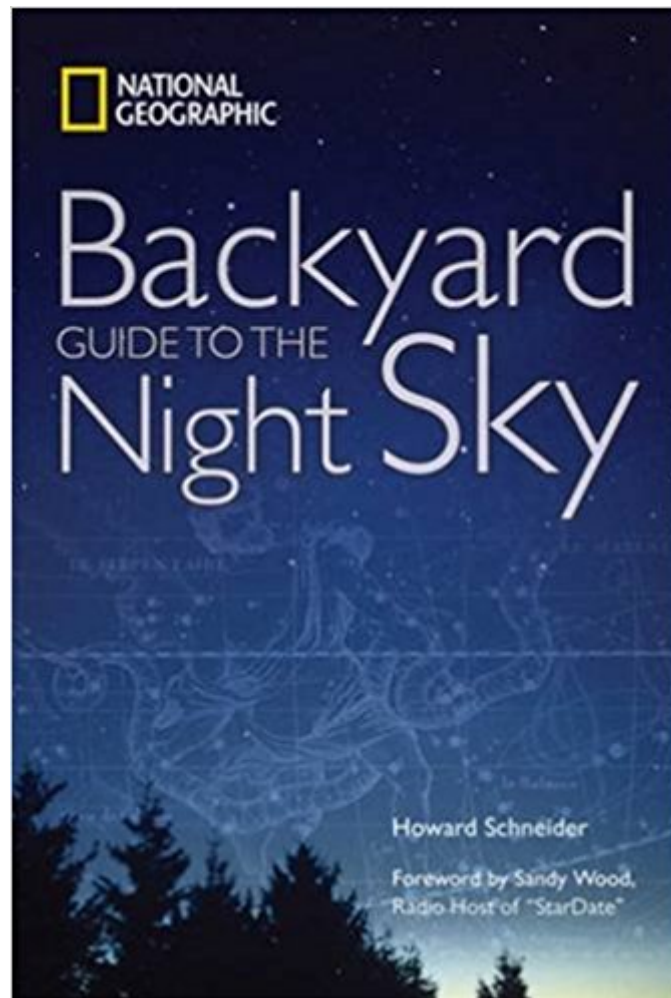




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National Geographic Backyard Guide To The Night Sky



Synopsis

Stargazing isn't too much fun to leave to astronomers, but often we're blinded by science's dry facts can easily turn enchantment into a chore. We just want to lie down, look up, and understand the heavens above. The National Geographic Backyard Guide to the Night Sky shows us how. Authors Howard Schneider and Patricia Daniels take an expert but easygoing approach that doesn't overwhelm; it invites. Ten chapters cover everything a beginning stargazer will need to know, from understanding the phases of the moon to picking Mars out of a planetary lineup to identifying the kinds of stars twinkling in the constellations. Throughout the book, star charts and tables present key facts in an easy-to-understand format, sidebars and fact boxes present illuminating anecdotes and fun facts to sweep us swiftly into the stardust, and by the time we realize we've been schooled in solid science we're too engrossed to object. Along with practical advice and hands-on tips to improve observation techniques, the guide includes an appendix full of resources; from books and web sites to lists of astronomy clubs and associations to local planetariums and museums. This indispensable book guides us on a new path into the night sky, truly one of the greatest shows on Earth.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Howard Schneider is a veteran reporter who contributes regularly on science and health for the Washington Post. Patricia Daniels has written extensively on history and science, including National Geographic Encyclopedia of Space.

3.5 stars. This isn't a bad book per se, but there are much better options out there; I read through most of this book before finding *NightWatch: A Practical Guide to Viewing the Universe* by Terence Dickinson. The Backyard Guide has some decent general information and is certainly compact, but *NightWatch* (now in its fourth edition, if that gives you an idea of its refinement and enduring legacy) has the edge on field usability because of its spiral binding. The Backyard Guide mentions, here and there, targets that are suitable for binocular or small telescope observation, but it really seems to be more of a general compendium of information on the basics of the night sky than a particularly helpful 'how-to' guide for someone who wants to learn the constellations and so forth. In this respect, its sections on the various constellations are pretty good. However, *NightWatch* does a much better job of stepping the beginning stargazer through the steps of finding common constellations and asterisms; for example, Backyard Guide mentions that your hand covers about 5 degrees of the sky, your thumb 1 degree and so forth, but *NightWatch* has much better illustrations of this and explanations for its use. Overall, as someone fairly new to amateur astronomy who has read and used both, I would suggest skipping this book and getting *NightWatch* instead.

Hardbound edition we received seems to have the strength and endurance level to be a "lifetime" volume to hand down to the generations of stargazers. Given as a gift to our kids and grandson, we look forward to hearing about their adventures outdoors, admiring "the heavens declar(ing) the glory of God!!" Two year old regularly points out to Grandma where the moon's location is...he has an early interest! Did find that the book was more "heady" and info-filled than we'd expected. It may work in his favor, since he is brilliant ;) as only a 2 year old grandson can be!!! We ALL LOVE the STAR MAPS!!

A good book for beginners. There is not much detail in most instances, but for someone peering out of their backyard it seems like a useful guide. I bought it as a guide to the constellations and some of the brighter stars and it works well for that purpose.

My daughter (11 years old) and I love this book! There are lots of pictures along with explanations of basic astronomical science. The only complaint I have is I keep catching my daughter reading it when she should be sleeping!

Best astronomy book I've read this year. I have to start with the illustrations which are superb and

some of which I wish could be framed. The content is well written and delves into a bit of history. The sections on the constellations are in ALPHABETICAL order! How easy it is to use it as a reference guide along with other books to maneuver your way around the subject.

I bought this book for my husband to use with his new 4 inch telescope and he loves it! This is a great intermediate book, maybe a little more advanced for beginners. If you buy this book with Turn Left at Orion, you'll be off to a great start finding all the messier objects in the night sky. The book also goes in depth in topics like light pollution and how to combat it, constellations, and other interesting astronomy tidbits. The pictures in the book are vivid and colorful. My husband couldn't put it down!

Purchased this for Christmas. We spent hours in the back yard with this book! My son loves it, and I did to. Great way to spend time together and learn a thing or two

Lots of info and guidance! My 12 yr. old grandson loved it since it went well with his new outdoor telescope! I highly recommend it!

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