

Acadiana Sky

Telescope "*Do's*" and "*Don'ts*"

Don't wipe a lens or mirror with a handkerchief—you'll scratch it.

Don't touch the surface of a reflector's mirror.

Don't put caps over lenses that are wet from dew; instead, let the lens dry to avoid the growth of fungus.

Don't take apart a refractor's objective lens or an eyepiece. If it must be done, send it to an optician or the manufacturer.

Don't force any moving parts—find out what the trouble is instead.

Don't, Don't, Don't look through an unfiltered telescope at the sun (*Don't* look at the sun with the unaided eye, either!).

Don't use solar filters that screw into the telescope's eyepiece—they may crack and blind you.

Do preserve the finish on metal parts by wiping them dry if they get wet from dew.

Do keep the telescope covered when not in use, with all parts together (eyepieces are easy to lose).

Do get accessories that match or exceed the quality of the telescope itself.

Do spread the tripod legs enough to prevent the telescope from tipping over if it gets bumped.

Do keep a reflector collimated.

Do align an equatorial mount with the North Celestial Pole (very near the North Star).

Do align your finder with the main telescope.

Do look through the telescope often -- observing is an art, and your skill will improve.