

Lunar Program Chair:

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Introduction

Welcome to the Astronomical League's Lunar Program. The Lunar Program introduces amateur astronomers to that object in the sky that most of us take for granted, and which deep sky observers have come to loathe. But even though deep sky observers search for dark skies (when the moon is down), this program gives them something to do when the moon is up. In other words, it gives us something to observe the rest of the month, and we all know that the sky is always clear when the moon is up.

The Lunar Program also allows amateurs in heavily light polluted areas to participate in an observing program of their own. This program is well suited for the young, inexperienced observer as well as the older observer just getting into our hobby since no special observing skills are required. It is well balanced because it develops naked eye, binocular, and telescopic observing skills. Finally, the Lunar Program was created as a project that can easily be done by schools and school children, especially those in the inner city.

Rules and Regulations

To qualify for the AL's Lunar Program Certificate and pin, you need only be a member of the Astronomical League, either through an affiliated club or as a Member-at-Large, and observe 100 features on the moon. These 100 features are broken down into three groups: 18 naked eye, 46 binocular, and 36 telescopic features. Any pair of binoculars and any telescope may be used for this program. As a matter of fact, to prove that the Lunar Program could be done with small apertures, we used 7x35 binoculars and a 60mm refractor. So, as you can see, this program does not require expensive equipment. Also, if you have problems with observing the features at one level, you may go up to the next higher level. In other words, if you have trouble with any of the naked eye objects, you may jump up to binoculars. If you have trouble with any of the binocular objects, then you may move up to a telescope. But if you have trouble with any of the telescopic objects, you are on your own. You will have to arrange your own time on the Hubble Space Telescope. Before moving up to the next higher level, please try to get as many

objects as you can with the instrument required at that level. Finally, when using binoculars, we recommend that you tripod mount them for stability.

We have made it as simple as possible to log your observations. Just list the instruments that you used at the top of pages 2 and 3 of this flyer, check off the features as you observe them in the "CHK" column, and then list the date and time you observed the feature in the columns on the right-hand side of pages 2 and 3. That is all there is to it.

For those of you that still may have some trouble observing the 100 original features of the program, we have included 10 optional activities on page 4. Each one activity counts as two of the observations on pages 2 and 3, and may be substituted for those observations.

If you would like a good recommendation for a lunar map to use with this program, we suggest, for those of you on a budget, "Moon Map" (S0003) by Sky Publishing Corp. for \$2.95. Sky Publishing Corp. can be reached at (800) 253-0245.

You must be a member of the Astronomical League to receive this certificate. If you are not a member now, [click here](#) to view information on membership in our organization.

To receive your Lunar Program Certificate and pin, simply send your observations along with your name, address, phone number, and club affiliation, either to your club's Awards Co-ordinator for verification, or to:

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Upon verification of your observations, your certificate and pin will be forwarded either to you or your club's Awards Coordinator, whomever you choose. You will also be added to the list of Lunar Program Awardees.

For information on which lunar features to observe, read the Lunar Program Observing list.