

Lunar II Program Introduction – Printable

Lunar II Observing Program Coordinator:

Cliff Mygatt
PO Box 8607
Port Orchard, WA 98366
(360) 265-5418
E-mail: cliffandchris@wavecable.com

The Moon is the nearest celestial object in our observable universe and is always a favorite at star parties. It was the target of past manned and robotic exploration missions, and it is likely that public interest will be stimulated again as new lunar missions are announced and executed. Many avid lunar observers voiced their desire for a second, more challenging program to follow the very popular Lunar Program. In response the Astronomical League formed a program for experienced lunar observers called Lunar II. Lunar II program goals include stimulating and maintaining a continued interest in lunar observing. This new program will also require participants to make at least 100 observations of the Moon. It is designed to help members improve their observing skills and expand their knowledge of the visible lunar surface. It is similar in some ways to the Messier Club and it requires participants to go farther than the Lunar Program. For example, prominent features like the Sea of Crises and Tycho Crater will be revisited, observing them in greater detail and/or in varied sun-lighting. New targets, such as the Cordillera Mountains have been added. Some observations will be relatively easy, such as finding and describing the Sea of Isles; others, like hunting domes and rilles will be more challenging and require greater observing skill. Participants will also create a small, basic map of the visible face of the Moon.

Rules and Requirements

To earn a Lunar II certificate and pin you must:

1. Be an Astronomical League member in good standing, through membership in an affiliated local club or society, or as a League member-at-large.
2. Have previously completed all Lunar Program requirements (either nominated for the Lunar Program or awarded a Lunar Program certificate).
3. Complete 100 or more of the observing tasks specified in the Lunar II target list.
 - a. Several targets must be observed twice, in different light/shadow conditions, as specified in the target list.
 - b. Several optional observing tasks are available, allowing you to make a few substitutions if you so choose.
 - c. Where this target list overlaps the Lunar Program list, assume Lunar II requires more observation and deeper study than before. If previous log entries include all information required for Lunar II, they may also be used for this certification.

4. Keep a detailed log of your observations.
 - a. Maintain a log similar to those required by most other League observing programs. Logs may be kept on paper or in an electronic file.
 - b. Notes for all observations should include:
 - target name and/or number
 - date & time
 - observing location(s)
 - sky conditions
 - equipment used

Additionally, you should record:

- both formal and common names of each target, if applicable. For example, Mare Crisium is also called the "Sea of Crises".
- the lunar phase the observation was made at. Use either named phase (i.e., "waning gibbous moon") or lunation day (i.e., "16 day moon").

c. Log written descriptions and/or sketches as specified in the target list. Written descriptions will be required for about three-quarters of your observations, and simple sketches will be required for the other one-quarter. For the sketches, label any major feature your sketch includes, such as additional craters sketched, mountain chains or peaks, or other annotations that will explain certain features of the sketch, like "this area is very rough", or "top of crater has a flat ring". The goal here is to build observing and record keeping skills, not to make an artist of you.

d. Optionally, you may present images (film or digital) in place of some (but not all) of your sketches, as allowed in the target list.

5. Identify and locate individual lunar surface features personally. You may use telescopes with "Go To" capability or other forms of automation, provided that automation is not used for anything other than steering to the Moon itself. Computerized lunar charts are also permitted so long as they are not linked to identify features or to steer your telescope.

Award Nomination

To nominate yourself for the Lunar II award:

1. Submit a copy of your observing log to the Lunar II club coordinator for review and certification (it will not be returned to you). You may send a printout, a scanned document, or a text file.
2. Include your name, Lunar Club certificate number (or mention Lunar Club nomination), postal address, e-mail address and telephone number if available, and the name of your local astronomy club/society. If you are a member-at-large, identify your status.
3. If you wish to have your Lunar II certificate and pin forwarded to your local club/society for presentation, please include the name and postal address of your

club (or its president, awards officer, etc.) If you do not know your officers, just mention your desire for local presentation and we will contact them on your behalf.

To nominate a club/society member for the Lunar II award:

1. Forward a copy of your member's observing log to the Lunar II coordinator, and include your name/contact information (for questions and for mailing the award package).
2. Once your astronomy club/society has an officer who has completed Lunar II, you may elect to have that person review logs locally and nominate members to the Lunar II coordinator by letter or email. The Lunar II coordinator will continue certifying logs for AL members-at-large and as requested. Each nomination must include:
 - a. A statement that the nominee's observing log meets all requirements;
 - b. All nominee contact information listed above;
 - c. The name, title, Lunar II certificate number, and contact information of the nominating officer.

Lunar II Award

After your log has been reviewed to verify you have completed all requirements, you will receive a congratulatory letter, a Lunar II certificate and Lunar II pin. Your pin & certificate will be similar in some ways to those awarded for the Lunar Program, but will have a Roman numeral "II" featured prominently. Your name and club affiliation (if applicable) will be recorded on this League website and also listed in an upcoming issue of our national quarterly newsletter, The Reflector.

For Questions, Comments, or Nominations

Cliff Mygatt
PO Box 8607
Port Orchard, WA 98366
(360) 265-5418
E-mail: cliffandchris@wavecable.com