

WHAT IF THE EYEPIECE OR MIRROR ARE DIRTY?

If the eyepiece or mirror seem dirty, **do NOT attempt to clean them**. Please contact the library at (760)341-7323 or email observatory@ranchomiragelibrary.org and we will determine if a cleaning is required.

WHAT IF THE TELESCOPE SEEMS OUT OF ALIGNMENT?

The telescope mirrors and finder scope are aligned before every checkout. **Do NOT attempt to align the mirrors. Refer to the user manual if you need to adjust the finder scope.** Please contact the library at (760)341-7323 or email observatory@ranchomiragelibrary.org and we will determine if an adjustment is required.

WHAT HAPPENS IF THE TELESCOPE BREAKS OR NEEDS MAINTENANCE?

Contact the library at (760)341-7323 or email observatory@ranchomiragelibrary.org. Upon telescope check-in, the Library Clerk will do a cursory review of the telescope and its accessories to note any missing items or damages. Staff and volunteer docents will do a further review and perform any maintenance as needed before the telescope is available for the next patron to checkout.

WHY IS THE NUT ON THE BASE LOOSE?

The nut on the base may appear loose but it is in fact a locking nut and there is no risk of the base coming apart. If it was completely tightened down, the telescope would not be able to swivel and easily be pointed in different directions.

HOW DO YOU CARRY THE TELESCOPE?

One way to carry the telescope is to place the vertical support for the telescope tube in the fold of your arm and pull it to your body (the football hold). This allows one arm to hold the telescope with the other arm free to open doors (and stiff-arm oncoming defensive linebackers). An alternative way to carry the telescope is a two-handed hold with one hand on the handle and the other hand supporting the base.

HOW DO YOU TRANSPORT THE TELESCOPE IN A VEHICLE?

The Library Telescope should be strapped into the car seat with the vertical support against the seatback. The lap belt should go across the bottom of the vertical support and the shoulder belt should go across the tube with the open end of the tube pointing up. Do not put it in the trunk of a car unsecured.

HOW LONG IS THE LOAN PERIOD FOR THE TELESCOPE?

The loan period is 7 days. No renewals are allowed at this time. After 7 days overdue the telescope will be considered lost, and the patron's account will be charged the replacement fee.

HOW CAN I DONATE?

Please visit www.ranchomiragelibrary.org/donate/ to donate to the Rancho Mirage Library and Observatory.



LIBRARY TELESCOPE PROGRAM

FAQs

The Rancho Mirage Library and Observatory would like to thank the **Smaby Family Foundation** for making this program possible.

We would also like to express our appreciation to the New Hampshire Astronomical Society and the St. Louis Astronomical Society for sharing their Library Telescope Program designs and lessons learned.

WHAT IS THE GOAL OF THE LIBRARY TELESCOPE PROGRAM?

To foster scientific literacy, stimulate an interest in astronomy, and provide people who have never looked through a telescope the opportunity to experience the excitement that comes from discovery.

WHY DOES THIS PROGRAM EXIST?

The program was implemented in the spring of 2022 after the Rancho Mirage Library and Observatory applied for and received a grant from the Smaby Family Foundation to launch the program with 30 telescopes, with a focus on adults wishing to share the experience with the children in their lives.

WHAT TELESCOPES ARE USED IN THE LIBRARY TELESCOPE PROGRAM?

Our nighttime use telescope is an Orion StarBlast 4.5" reflecting tabletop telescope, which was modified by Library and Observatory staff and volunteer docents to make the telescope more patron-friendly and durable.

WHAT MODIFICATIONS WERE MADE TO THE TELESCOPES?

Modifications were made by Rancho Mirage Library and Observatory staff and volunteer docents to make the telescope more patron-friendly and durable. The modifications to the telescopes include adding a zoom eyepiece, tethers to the dust caps, and helpful labels.

WHAT OTHER ITEMS ARE INCLUDED WITH THE TELESCOPE?

The telescope kit includes a gear bag attached to the telescope's base that holds the following items: telescope user manual, constellation pocket guide, red light flashlight, spare batteries for the flashlight and finder scope.

WHAT KIND OF TRAINING IS INCLUDED?

A brief introduction to the telescope is given by the library clerk upon telescope checkout. There is also a QR code and URL label on the telescope tube that directs to www.librarytelescope.org/get-started with instructional videos and additional references for using the telescope and accessories.

WHAT IS THE COST OF A TELESCOPE AND HOW IS THE PURCHASE FUNDED?

The initial cost of purchasing and launching the program was generously donated by the Smaby Family Foundation. Any repair or replacement costs that arise will be funded by Rancho Mirage Library and Observatory. Each modified telescope with accessories costs about \$450.

WHO OWNS THE TELESCOPE?

The Rancho Mirage Library and Observatory own the telescopes and their accessories.

WHERE DID YOU GET THE TELESCOPES?

Our telescopes were purchased from the telescope manufacturer, Orion Telescopes and Binoculars.

WHAT DOES THE TELESCOPE WEIGH?

The telescope weighs 13 lbs (6 kg).

WHAT ARE THE TELESCOPE CHECKOUT PROCEDURES?

The checkout procedure is similar to other materials the Rancho Mirage Library and Observatory has available for checkout. The patron must be in good standing and be 18 years or older or have a parent/guardian present. The patron will be required to review the Telescope Loan Policy and Frequently Asked Questions and listen to the Library Clerk as they deliver brief instructions on telescope handling and use.

WHERE WOULD IT BE BEST TO USE THE TELESCOPE?

If you live in a light polluted area, Earth's moon and bright planets will be visible in a library telescope. Deep-sky objects like galaxies, nebulae, and clusters will be best viewed in a darker location.

WHAT CAN YOU SEE WITH THE TELESCOPE?

The most accessible objects to view are the Earth's moon and bright planets. Deep-sky objects like galaxies, nebulae, and star clusters can also be seen with the telescope.

WHY ISN'T THERE A CASE TO CARRY THE TELESCOPE IN?

With the various modifications made to the telescope, there are pieces that stick out from it and could be damaged if bumped against anything. Keeping all the pieces visible makes it less likely to bump any of the pieces. Telescopes in totes tend to rattle around in them, they are hard to secure in a vehicle, and need two hands to hold the rather bulky mass.