

Astronomy Book Review...

I have a book for people with little or no background in Astronomy. It is called quite simply "The Stars – A New Way to See Them" by H. A. Rey.

I learned my constellations by the having star charts with lines connecting the various stars in a group (constellations and asterisms) and except for a very few, they looked nothing like what the name given. Then there were other books that put drawn pictures around the stars, but they did nothing to connect the stars in any reasonable fashion. Enter H. A. Rey with his book. He made simple stick figures with the stars that look surprisingly like the names of the constellations. He also uses English names for the constellations so you don't have to know Latin to figure it out. Neat stuff for the beginner.

This book is designed for naked eye viewing. You don't need a telescope or binoculars to use it. As you get comfortable with the stars, he does point out things to look at with either binoculars or a small telescope, but this book is designed more as a major road map, not something that gives you all the little tourist stops.

I will admit that even though I've been into Astronomy for over 30 years, I never really took the time to discover or remember the constellations. I know the major ones, and can use my star chart to find others, but this book will help me to remember ones I don't know at the present time. It will be nice to know my way in the sky without having to consult a map every time I look at something I don't know.

If you struggle with what star is what, I give this book a very strong recommendation.