

What telescope should I buy?

After quite some time, I'm getting back to this question. Since the holiday season is approaching and fall is one of my favorite times to get the scopes out... Here are my opinions on telescopes to buy.

If I'm on your list and money is no object here are the scopes I want. ☐

[The Questar 3.5 inch anniversary model](#). This has a lot of sentimental value for me, and if money were no object I would own one.

[Any really large reflector](#). This one is from Orion Telescopes.
[A good sized goto Scope](#) and an observatory to go with it.
[Or maybe a dedicated Solar Scope???](#)

OK, I understand you are not buying one for me, but if you are a first time telescope buyer, you may see those prices and just stop your shopping. Or you will go to Walmart and buy the telescopes they have during the Christmas shopping time with all the pretty pictures on them.

In shopping for a telescope, size matters. You want the biggest scope you can afford and move around. Magnification power however does not matter. I don't care if the telescope at your local super store is 150 power or they say it will magnify 200 times. You'll never use it. Most of the time, even with the best telescope, you can't use it. So are you going to be able to with the \$30 – \$40 scope from the super store?

Even though my first suggestion would be binoculars, I won't go there, you want a telescope... I know this, because I was there once. I still don't have my binoculars...

Second suggestion a 4 to 8 inch reflector on a Dobson mount. The mount is very simple. It moves Up and Down – Left and Right. Very stable and inexpensive. An 8 inch reflector would

probably be more of an intermediate scope, but it may be the only telescope you ever need. (want is another matter). The 4 and 6 inch scopes are excellent for beginners.

3rd suggestion a 60 or 70 mm refractor on a good mount. These tend to be more expensive. The mount design makes the cheaper models almost unusable. But they do look like the telescope everybody expects to see. This may be important to you.

4th suggestion.... Stay away from computer controlled models for your first scope. You really don't want to have to learn how to use the computer end of the telescope when you are just starting out. That just adds to the frustration.

So here are some actual telescopes that fit my suggestions. I'm using the Orion Telescope company site, because they have nice pictures, many different scopes, and a lot of other good information on their site. I don't own an Orion Scope, and I'm not suggesting they are the only place to get telescopes. In fact, I will add links for other sites main pages.

Refractors (lenses)

[80mm table top model](#) Nice looking little scope with what looks like a very nice mount. A good solid table will be needed to use this. A used end table from a garage sale would work nicely. A solid picnic table (that nobody is sitting on) would work well too.

[70mm refractor](#) The mount looks nice, but the tripod looks a bit on the flimsy side. This may make an shaky mount. Weight can be hung from the center support to help stabilize it.

Reflectors(mirrors)

[100mm tabletop scope](#) This mount is the same as the first refractor I mentioned. Nice size, looks easy to move around.

[4.5 inch tabletop scope](#) Slightly larger mirror than the one above. I've actually used this scope once. It is an excellent first scope.

[4.5 inch equatorial](#) Same scope as above, but a different

mount. Adds to the cost, but you don't need the table.

Some Telescope web pages

[Orion](#)

[Meade Telescopes](#)

[Celestron Telescopes](#)

[Optics Planet](#)

[Anacortes](#)

[Discovery Telescopes](#)