What telescope is best for me?

🌟 The best telescope for you is the one that you will use! 🌟

1. **Consider trying binoculars first.**
   - Easy to use, easy to store, ultra-portable.
   - Can see large sections of the sky at once.
   - Can use them for daytime activities.

2. Before you buy a telescope, ask yourself these questions...
   - How well do you know the night sky? Finding objects is not easy without practice. A quality "go-to" computerized telescope is costly and its operation must be mastered.
   - How hard is the scope to assemble? If it is too complicated, you won't use it.
   - Where will you do most of your observing? A city resident will likely need to cart it to a dark site.
   - Where do you think you'll be in the hobby in three years? If you really like astronomy, you'll outgrow a small scope in six months.
   - Will you eventually pursue astrophotography? You'll need a sturdy, motor driven mount that tracks accurately.

### Telescope Diameter Dilemma

Since most sky objects are relatively dim, a telescope needs to gather large amounts of light. Therefore, larger diameter telescopes are better than smaller ones. However, they are also bulkier – and less likely to make it outside in cold weather!

### Telescope and observing tips:

- **Magnification** – low power is used for most objects.
- **Finder scope** – a small one is nearly useless.
- The larger the telescope's diameter, the better views it gives, but the less portable it is.
- If the scope has poor optics or a wobbly mount, it will be frustrating to use. Hence, it won't be used.
- Finding celestial objects requires practice and patience.
- Never point the telescope at the sun without the proper filter installed ON THE FRONT of the scope.
- Don't expect what you see in the eyepiece to closely resemble what you see in photographs.

4. **Visit your local amateur astronomy club!**
   - You can see and try the various sizes and types of telescopes.
   - Some clubs have programs for lending telescopes.
   - Members will be happy to guide you through the scope selection process.

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**An excellent size is 10 x 50:**

10 = magnification
50 = the diameter in millimeters of the front lens.

**Common Telescope Designs**

- **Reflector**
  - Easy to use
  - Least expensive scope design
  - Great for clusters, nebulae, and galaxies
  - Can be bulky
  - Generally not suitable for astroimaging
  - Shown with a Dobsonian Mount

- **Refractor**
  - Easy to use
  - Tend to be costly
  - Not suitable for dim objects
  - Can be used for astroimaging
  - Great for the moon and planets
  - Shown with an Equatorial Mount

- **Schmidt-Cassegrain**
  - Portable, but heavy
  - Tend to be costly
  - Suitable for astroimaging
  - All purpose scope

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