Various kinds of sources are available in Timme Library to be used to find information about astronomy. A source is chosen primarily by the kind of information needed but also by the amount of detail required. Keep in mind that the most current information will be found in recent issues of periodicals. Each of these kinds of sources are briefly described in the following sections with some examples which are available.

**Dictionaries and Encyclopedias**

Use these sources if you need basic information about a specific term or topic having to do with astronomy. They are all found in the reference section of the library.

- This source provides short and to the point definitions. Not much detail is provided.

- Longer and more detailed definitions are available in this dictionary.

- Being an encyclopedia, the articles are much more comprehensive that those in glossaries or dictionaries. The illustrations are also useful for certain topics.

- This is the most thorough and detailed reference source on astronomy in Timme Library. If this source is not adequate, find an astronomy textbook or look up books on your topic in the outline catalog.

**Handbooks and Field Guides**

Handbooks and field guides are written primarily as aides in practical astronomy. They include things such as star charts, photography, and the use and set-up of telescopes and observatories. Those which are not marked “Ref” can be checked out.

*Astronomy and Telescopes: A Beginner's Handbook* (QB64 .T7)
- This is an excellent book for an amateur astronomer. It covers a little basic astronomy and its history, telescopes, astrophotography, setting up an observatory and describes some specialized equipment.

*Collins Pocket Guide to Stars and Planets* (QB63 .R5)
- As a source of considerable astronomical information packed into a small volume, this guide is hard to surpass. It is literally stuffed with maps, tables, descriptions and photographs from cover to cover.

- This volume describes itself as an "owners manual" for the sky. It is suitable for a beginner yet detailed enough to be usefull for someone with some experience in astronomy.
The Skywatcher’s Handbook (QB64 .S58)  
This book is divided into three sections: the daylight sky, the night sky and observing and recording the sky.  
The third section includes photography of daylight and night skies, use of telescopes and binoculars, and setting up a home observatory.

Whitney’s Star Finder (QB65 .W48)  
The purpose of this book is to explain and help locate things found in the sky rather than explain astronomy.  
It also provides some tables, definitions and descriptions.

Yearbook of Astronomy (Ref QB1 .Y4)  
This book contains star charts, tables of astronomical events, photographs, descriptive articles and other miscellaneous astronomical data.

Atlas and Star Catalogs

Star atlases and catalogs vary widely in exact content. In general, however, they contain a selection of the following items: photographs, maps, descriptions of astronomical bodies and tables of data. Some samples are described below.

The New Atlas of the Universe (Ref QB44.2 .M66)  
This is an outstanding work. It is thorough and beautifully done. In addition to its reference capabilities it would look great on the coffee table. The photographs are stunning.

Norton’s 2000.0 (QB65 .N7)  
Norton’s Star Atlas has historically been the most famous of the stars atlases for the amateur astronomer. This update for epoch 2000.0 continues the tradition of excellence.

Patrick Moore’s Color Star Atlas (QB65 .M59)  
For an atlas a lot of descriptive information about each planet is included in this volume. The explanations, however, are useful for an observer who wants to know more about why the planets appear as they do.

Periodicals

Timme Library subscribes to two magazines which cover the field of astronomy exclusively. These magazines are Sky & Telescope and Astronomy. In addition, articles about astronomy regularly appear in Scientific American. All three magazines are indexed in the General Periodicals Index on InfoTrac and in General Science Index. You may also find it useful to browse through a few issues of each.

Other Monographs

Timme Library has other books dealing with astronomy, and its' various subdivisions. These range from textbooks, which are general in nature, to books on specific subtopics such as pulsars, planets, the sun or asteroids. The library has a good selection of books about various subtopics. These books can be located using the online catalog. Ask at the reference desk if you need help using the catalog.

If you want to browse the shelves, the following call number ranges should be useful.

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