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Solar Eclipse Safety

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Here are links to the NASA and MTSU web pages related to the Aug. 21, 2017 eclipse. Pay particular attention to the links related to safety.

<https://eclipse2017.nasa.gov/>

<http://mtsu.edu/eclipse>

Or, do this Google search: "solar eclipse" site: edu

There are several safe ways to view the eclipse, and many web sites will give you important information about how to do so. But, because of the dangers involved, let's look at what NOT to do:

DO NOT look directly at the sun unless you are using special "eclipse glasses" or #14 welder's glass. Looking at the sun with unprotected eyes could lead to permanent blindness. No type of regular sunglasses will protect your eyes if you look directly at the sun.

DO NOT point your camera directly at the sun unless you are using a special sun filter mounted on the camera. Neutral density filters will NOT work.

DO NOT try to hold # 14 welder's glass in front of your camera and try to take a picture. If the glass slips out of position you could burn out the camera or your eyes.

DO NOT point your unprotected camera at the sun then look through the view finder, even if you are wearing "eclipse glasses." You will burn out the sensor in your camera and possibly burn a hole in your glasses, leading to damage to the retina in your eye.

We're somewhat reluctant to say this, but you can look directly at the sun, BUT ONLY DURING TOTALITY.

By the way, looking at the sun wearing regular sunglasses can cause even more damage. That's because although the glasses make the sun darker they do not block ultraviolet rays, which are what causes the damage. So you may be able to look at the sun longer without pain, but the damage will still be there.

You may come across numerous web sites where the owner say they stared at the sun without damage. But they don't tell you the whole story. Yes, you can look at the sun without damage, but only within 10 minutes of sunset and sunrise when the sun is low on the horizon and the atmosphere scatters the harmful ultraviolet rays.

We do not recommend doing a simple Google search to find information on sun-safety. You will find too much misleading information (see the paragraph above). Many colleges and universities, however, have launched eclipse-related sites, and they are easy to find: (1) Go to Google.com (2) In the search box put < "solar eclipse" site:edu > (without the brackets). This will take you to hundreds of university web sites related to the eclipse.