

Astronomy Software

Goal	List of software suitable for use with very young children
Age	3 upwards
Difficulty	Easy to Difficult
Skills	Observation
Materials	A computer, a projector, in some cases an internet connection, a sound system is advisable
Pre-requisites	none

Introduction

This is a non-exhaustive list of astronomy software. This selection was chosen because it contains only freeware and is suitable with very young children. For a more complete list of astronomy software see: <http://www.midnightkite.com/software.html>

Software for discovery

We cannot easily travel across the sky and see its beauty close-up. Therefore 3-dimensional astronomical software is a very powerful tool to take children on a journey through space.

Featuring beautiful telescope images, these journeys become very realistic and powerful when accompanied by beautiful music. Most of them allow scripting, i.e. you can programme your own journey and save it.

Selection

Stellarium http://stellarium.sourceforge.net/	Look at the sky at any time from anywhere on earth. Available for all platforms, standalone.
Celestia http://www.shatters.net/celestia/	Fly through space to planets, moons, stars, galaxies. Available for all platforms, standalone.
Google Earth http://earth.google.com/	Zoom in on the earth anywhere - access satellite images. Available for most platforms, requires an internet connection.
Google Sky http://www.google.com/sky/	Zoom in on the sky anywhere - access real images taken by sky surveys. Available for most platforms, requires an internet connection.
Google Moon http://www.google.com/moon/	Zoom in on the moon. Available for most platforms, requires an internet connection.



Google Mars http://www.google.com/mars/	Zoom in on mars. Available for most platforms, requires an internet connection.
Orbitron http://www.stoff.pl/	Predict satellite appearances. Available for Windows only, standalone.
SkyChart http://www.ap-i.net/skychart/	Generate sky charts. Available for all platforms, standalone.
Virtual Moon Atlas http://ap-i.net/avl/en/start	Full map of moon, information on craters, predict phases. Available for Windows only, standalone.

Notes

Each of these software packages come with a set of instructions n how to use them.

Please let us know how you use them with young children and we will add those uses to the database of UNAWE activities as 'Computer activities'.

Source: SAAO - UNAWE South Africa

