

## Light Pollution – When Night Turns to Day

*Our nights have become brighter as a result of artificial light sources, making stargazing difficult.*

**Munich, the 12<sup>th</sup> of April 2016** – Every other person has a look at the sky from time to time. However, such a leisurely activity has become more seldom and less enjoyable. Approximately half of the world’s people live in cities with that proportion expected to only rise in the coming decades, further worsening the outlook that people may be able to look up and reflect on life.

“The fact that so many people can enjoy looking at the stars is heartening. Unfortunately, fewer and fewer have the opportunity to view the night sky unobstructed,” says Dominik Schwarz, sales director of Universe2go. “We want to make people aware of light pollution, while bringing them closer to the experience of the night sky with our handheld planetarium.”

The determining factor in limitations of stargazing is light pollution. Of course, it is not about light, itself, being dirty, but rather about excessive lighting resulting in ‘light domes’, which disturb the landscape around us and outshine the night sky. The result is a night sky that disappears ever more out our sight. Even today, the stars are quite difficult to see in big cities.

Worldwide, the amount of artificial light has risen substantially in the past few decades, above all as a result of growing population areas in cities and their suburbs along with street lighting in these areas. Light pollution is also a challenge for ecosystems. The day-night rhythms of many animals, aside of people, are being disturbed by the increase in lighting. Additionally, the night sky is already too bright for stargazers to be able to see objects such as dim stars, distant nebulae or in some cases, the Milky Way. Even some asteroids are difficult to see.

Although many countries in the world don’t have regulations against light pollution, the existence of so-called star parks or dark sky parks provide a break from the overly illuminated night skies of cities. These parks include installations of lighting systems designed to only direct light downwards and don’t feature blue light. Many of these parks have also taken it upon themselves to inform participants about astronomy and light pollution.

There are a multitude of dark sky areas in Europe and the Americas, as well as around the world.

### **Universe2go has put together 5 tips for experiencing dark skies:**

- If you are considering a trip in and around North America, reroute your trip to include areas such as big sky country near the Rocky Mountains.
- Check out [Darksky.org](http://Darksky.org) for more on dark sky parks and reserves.
- Go up – higher altitudes provide great opportunities to see the night sky in all its glory!
- National parks or nature reserves are great locations with limited lighting.
- Keep an eye on the moon phases – new moons are fantastic for seeing even the faintest stars!

**About Universe2go:**

[Universe2go](#) is an interactive star viewer, which combines a view of the real night sky with the digital world. As a two-piece augmented reality system, the Universe2go brings together a black star viewer with your own smartphone and the accompanying app. Through an integrated mirror in the star viewer, a digital picture of constellations is transmitted to the user's eyes. Simultaneously, the user can see the night sky through the transparent front of the viewer. Thanks to GPS and modern smartphone sensors, superimposing this digital picture over the real starry sky is now a possibility. Constellations, planets, deep-sky objects and even satellites are the primary feature of Universe2go, with the addition of the audio guide and factoids about the object in view. The user navigates the menu with head movements, allowing the user to change modes without taking the smartphone out of the viewer.

**About the producer:**

Universe2go is distributed by Omegon. With a variety of around 500 different products, Omegon offers a huge product range in the fields of hobby astronomy, nature watching, sport optics and microscopy. Thanks to a focus on direct sales of the products, customers profit from tested quality and an excellent standard of service to very attractive prices. The company behind Omegon, Nimax in Landsberg am Lech near Munich, operates several specialized online shops and belongs with Astroshop.de to Europe's leading retailers in the field of hobby astronomy. More about the company is available at [www.nimax.de](http://www.nimax.de).

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