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## Plan a Community Celebration



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### Party like it's 2012!

If you are hosting a Transit of Venus celebration, here are some items to consider. See the [2004 Celebration in Mishawaka, IN](#), for scenes of an observing site.



#### Months before:

- Scout out event sites, with consideration given to unobstructed sight-lines, security, parking, restroom availability, electricity, internet access, and absence of lights with glare (for telescope viewing later that night).
- Secure permission from landowner or government entity to conduct event at that site.
- Get approval for tents or trailers to be set up adjacent to or near scopes, especially for telescope owners who come from afar.
- Invite amateur astronomers with telescopes and solar filters to set up their scopes for public viewing. Ask them to stay beyond twilight for stargazing session and planet-viewing (Mars and Saturn).
- Invite local musicians or school bands to perform John Phillip Sousa's *Transit of Venus March* or other [ToV music](#).
- Put out a call for [Transit of Venus art](#) through a local art organization or advocate.
- Purchase [solar viewing equipment](#), whether simple or major. Realize that with just solar shades, Venus is small--near the limit (about a minute of arc) of what the human eye can discern. Don't wait for last minute when supplies are hard to get.
- Send out invitations--to family, friends, teachers, elected officials, special interest groups.
- Purchase and use some [Transit of Venus paraphernalia](#), such as T-shirts, to start generating interest and dialogue. Be the first one "in the know", then spread the enthusiasm.
- Order tent, portable bathroom, tables. Remember, you are competing for equipment with June weddings and graduation parties. Fortunately, it's a Tuesday.
- Seek financial support and/or active participation from local businesses and organizations.
- Contact local planetarium to present slate of sky shows related to transit. Additional, flexible programming is key if you have cloudy weather during the transit.
- Partner with local schools, teachers, and districts to integrate transit of Venus [education resources](#) into their existing curriculum. Don't just pile more to-do onto their plate.
- Watch <http://youtu.be/4RGr9FcBrSM> for eye safety information.

#### Weeks before:

- Build some rear projection screens so multiple observers can gather around a single telescope and view safely. Instructions are at [http://cdn.transitofvenus.org/docs/Build\\_a\\_Sun\\_Funnel.pdf](http://cdn.transitofvenus.org/docs/Build_a_Sun_Funnel.pdf).
- Determine with confidence where the sun will set on June 5. You want a clear view with no obstructions from the time of first contact through sunset. Mark that location for telescopes to be set up. Realize that normally clear sight-lines may be impeded. For example, if you are planning a sunset photograph with a pier and lighthouse, you may find the pier crowded with people that evening.
- Purchase and chill some Transit of Venus beer. There will be a rush in the opening days of June--you don't want to be empty-handed after sunset.
- Obtain a P.A. system over which to narrate and to play music.
- Obtain a shortwave radio that can broadcast a WWV time signal, which will provide time that is certain to be accurate. WWV transmits at 2.5, 5, 10, 15 and 20 MHz. Or find a ham radio operator to do this for you.
- Send out press releases and invitations to local media outlets.
- Download the free [Transit of Venus phone app](#). Try the app's practice runs to get a sense of timing internal contact.
- Print observer's guide or an on-site [handout](#). Include local circumstances (e.g., latitude, longitude, predicted contact times) and a space for observers to record their actual time of observed contact.
- Double check your own gear for [viewing the transit safely](#). If projecting, make an aperture stop for your



telescope to attenuate the direct sunlight. Practice targeting the sun for an extended period.

- Print certificates for observers who witness the phenomenon, or for guests at your site who contribute their observed contact times to global experiments.
- Notify local police and emergency service providers of your anticipation of a crowd.

Day(s) before:

- Set up monitors that are capable of displaying webcasts. Be sure they are sufficiently shielded, such as in a tent, so that the images can be seen during the daytime. Alternative programming is especially important if you have a chance of cloudy weather.
- Gather supplies for kids' [activities](#) related to the transit, such as the [Stained Glass Window activity](#).
- Mark on the ground the prime spots where pre-identified, qualified telescope owners will set up. These have clear sight lines for the duration of the transit.
- Re-watch <http://youtu.be/4RGr9FcBrSM> for solar viewing safety.



[This article is under construction. We welcome [your input](#).]

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