Building a Backyard Observatory

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Why Build an Observatory

- Able to spend more time observing
- Set up time is minimized
- No more lugging equipment around
- Weather rolls in? – Easy close up
- Some protection from light and wind
- MORE OBSERVING TIME!!
Planning

- Choose site carefully
  - minimize light intrusion
  - maximize view of sky
- Decide which type you want
- Decide what size you need
Types of Observatories

- Pier with an easy removable cover
- Domed observatory
- Roll-off roof observatory
- Numerous types and examples available
  - on the Internet and in books
  - obs.nineplanets.org/obs/obslist.html
Pros & Cons

- Pier w/Removable Cover
  - no light or wind protection
  - still must lug some things
  - cheapest
Pros & Cons

- Domed observatories
  - pretty expensive
  - hard to build in my opinion
  - limited view of sky
  - not good for Dobsonians
  - best protection from light and wind
Pros & Cons

- Roll-off Roof Observatories
  - not best protection from light & wind
  - large view of sky
  - relatively inexpensive
  - can be built to accommodate Dobsonians
My Choice and Why

- Roll-off Roof
  - ease of construction
  - relatively cheap
  - sets of plans readily available
Construction Pictures
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Recommendations on Construction

- Check and double and triple check level and square.
- If money is a consideration, use a concrete pier. They work great.
- My research showed many developed binding problems. Backyard Observatories plans were used for mine. No problems encountered since built (Three years).