

ICOUK Optical Aids Policy (2026)

Introduction

We have received clear guidance (fatwa) on the use of Optical Aids for UK moon sightings, provided they are not “extraordinary”, which could show the moon when it’s invisible to the human eye¹ (e.g., CCD/CMOS imaging). Therefore, we have reviewed the recent moon sighting data from our past reports and concluded that the astronomy binoculars and telescopes listed below are suitable for UK moon sightings. They are given for guidance purposes only.

Optical Aids

The astronomy binoculars below have 15 to 25x magnifications with varying light-gathering capabilities that make the moon bigger and brighter, and hence **easier to see** with the naked eye at the eyepiece (mounted on a suitable tripod).



The **refractor** telescopes (with AZ-GTI mount) below have good-quality optics and can track the moon automatically, if it has been aligned correctly. A 400 - 500 mm FL telescope with a 10 - 25 mm eyepiece will give 20 - 50x magnification.



Rationale

Many existing fatawa allow the use of Optical Aids for moon sightings without any restrictions, but some UK scholars seem to believe that modern Optical Aids are **too powerful** and could show the moon beyond the visible light range. Therefore, a clear policy on the use of Optical Aids is required, which is suitable for moon sightings but not as powerful as the [Hubble](#) or [JWST](#) Telescopes (with 500x to 600x magnification), which can show distant galaxies or nebulae! They use REFLECTION (large mirrors)², whereas most moon sighting optical aids are relatively low-powered, like binoculars and small telescopes (with 20x to 50x magnification), which use REFRACTION (glass lenses). Furthermore, from our recent ICOUK moon sighting reports, we have found that the minimum threshold for sighting the moon with Optical Aids is [3° altitude](#) (in winter) and [9° elongation](#) approx. (in spring), which are well within the **naked eye** visibility range.

The reason for stating the minimum lunar parameters and the type of Optical Aids commonly used is to justify them for UK Moon sightings to assist/support the naked eye, as they are **not** powerful enough to show the invisible moon!

DISCLAIMER: This policy document may be revised in the future without further notice.

¹ “Use of Optical Aids and Cameras for UK Moon Sightings”, Fatwa by Darul Uloom Karachi (2/2025) / [bit.ly/icoukOpticalAids]

² Note that Reflection (mirrors) is mainly used for digital sensors, and Refraction (lenses) is mainly used for eyepieces (optical aids).