

COLLIMATION OF A SCT

I take no credit for this – I found this image and description by Steve Walters many years ago and it's the one I have used ever since.

1. With reference to the image below, check the orientation of your collimation screws "A", "B" and "C". They may be rotated from the guide depending on your mount and the direction you're pointing the tube. All that matters is that the screw that is lowest to the ground be called "A" and that the eyepiece be pointing up away from "A" (use a diagonal). The guide below shows how you would see it from the front of the tube.
2. Use about a 10mm (you want about 250X for a 10") eyepiece on a mag 0 or 1 star first.
3. Simply note the direction of the hole offset in the star image and find the corresponding image on the collimation guide image below. Each image has a label telling which screw "A", "B" or "C" to turn and the direction (clockwise CW or counterclockwise CCW). Make VERY SMALL adjustments, 1/16 of a turn at a time.
4. Remember to re-center the star to see the effect of the adjustment. Stars at the edges of SCTs are distorted by other optical impairments such as field curvature, astigmatism, etc. If you do not re-center the star, you are wasting your time. Also, remember that it does not have to be the very same star at each step in the iteration. Just centre any star and check the shape of the donut.
5. After initial collimation use as high power as possible (500 – 600X) and repeat on a mag 2 or 3 star

SCT Collimation Guide

Make VERY SMALL adjustments (1/16 turn)
Star must ALWAYS be centered

