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Triangulation is a method to calculate how high an object is. If you know the length of one side of a right triangle and can measure an angle, you can determine the height.

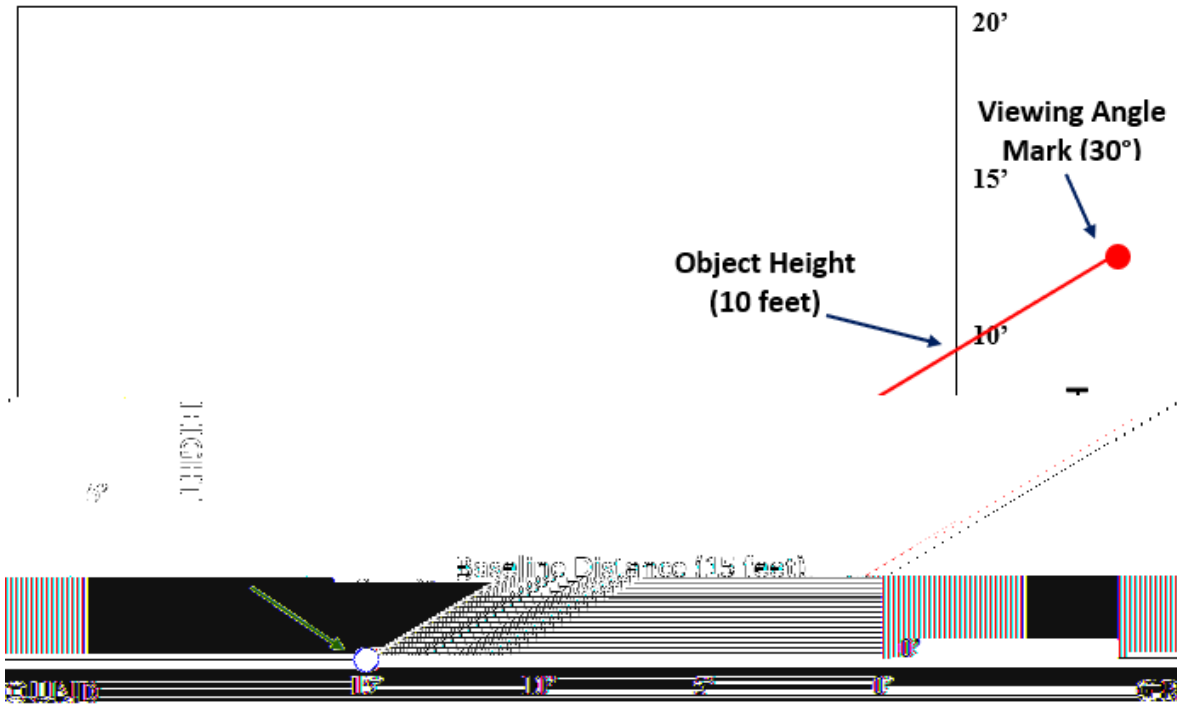
Write down the baseline distance and viewing angle,
from your measu07(an)-4 20og8w0hIT1 14.049o995(ec)4.004(t71yo)5.997nd e anet

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Example Graph

Baseline Distance: 15 feet

Viewing Angle: 30 degrees



Astrolabes, Triangulation, and Astronomy

An astrolabe is a tool used to measure the altitude of objects in the sky. The astrolabe was invented around 200 BC, and since then has been used by astronomers and navigators around the world to determine latitude, time of day, time of year, and position of stars and planets.

Canterbury Astrolabe Quadrant,
ca. 1388 British Museum, Wikimedia Commons

You can also use an astrolabe to calculate the height of objects, in a process called triangulation. If you know the length of one side of a right triangle and can measure an angle with an astrolabe, you can then determine the height. In the 1920s, a Norwegian astrophysicist named Carl Størmer used triangulation to find out the height of the aurora. He discovered the aurora is usually between 90 and 130 km (56 to 81 miles) above the Earth!

