

Key to Dreyer's Descriptions in the NGC/IC

When J. L. E. Dreyer edited his two main catalogs he included useful comments in a cryptic shorthand in order to save space. Following is a key to Dreyer's shorthand descriptions.

*	a single star
*10	a star of 10th magnitude
*7-8	star of magnitude 7 or 8
**	double star (same as D*)
***	triple star
!	remarkable
!!	very much so
!!!	a magnificent or otherwise interesting object
ab	about
alm	almost
am	among
annul	annular or ring nebula
att	attached
b	brighter
bet	between
biN	binuclear
bn	brightest to north side
bs	brightest to south side
bp	brightest to preceding (westward) side
bf	brightest to following (eastward) side
B	bright
c	considerably
chev	chevelure ("a head of hair")
co	coarse, coarsely
com	cometic (cometary form)
comp	companion
conn	connected
cont	in contact
C	compressed
Cl	cluster
d	diameter
def	defined
dif	diffused
diffic	difficult
dist	distance, or distant
D	double
e	extremely, excessively
ee	most extremely
er	easily resolvable
exc	eccentric
E	extended
f	following (eastward)
F	faint
g	gradually
glob.	globular
gr	group
i	irregular
iF	irregular figure
inv	involved, involving
l	little (adv.); long (adj.)
L	large
m	much
m	magnitude
M	middle, or in the middle
n	north
neb	nebula
nebs	nebulous
neby	nebulosity

nf	north following
np	north preceding
ns	north-south
nr	near
N	nucleus, or to a nucleus
p	preceding (westward)
pf	preceding-following
p	pretty (adv., before F. B. L, S)
pg	pretty gradually
pm	pretty much
ps	pretty suddenly
plan	planetary nebula (same as PN)
prob	probably
P	poor (sparse) in stars
PN	planetary nebula
r	resolvable (mottled, not resolved)
rr	partially resolved, some stars seen
rrr	well resolved, clearly consisting of stars
R	round
RR	exactly round
Ri	rich in stars
s	suddenly (abruptly)
s	south
sf	south following
sp	south preceding
sc	scattered
sev	several
st	stars (pl.)
st 9...	stars of 9th magnitude and fainter
st 9..13	stars of magnitude 9 to 13
stell	stellar, point-like
susp	suspected
S	small in angular size
S*	small (faint) star
trap	trapezium
triangle	triangle, forms a triangle with
triN	trinuclear
v	very
vv	very (greater emphasis)
var	variable