

# Package ‘skylight’

November 17, 2025

**Type** Package

**Title** A Simple Sky Illuminance Model

**Version** 1.4

**Maintainer** Koen Hufkens <koen.hufkens@gmail.com>

**Description** A tool to calculate sky illuminance values (in lux) for both sun and moon. The model is a translation of the Fortran code by Janiczek and DeYoung (1987) <[https://archive.org/details/DTIC\\_ADA182110](https://archive.org/details/DTIC_ADA182110)>.

**URL** <https://github.com/bluegreen-labs/skylight>,  
<https://bluegreen-labs.github.io/skylight/>

**BugReports** <https://github.com/bluegreen-labs/skylight/issues>

**Depends** R (>= 4.2)

**Imports** Rcpp

**LinkingTo** Rcpp, RcppArmadillo

**License** AGPL-3

**ByteCompile** true

**RoxygenNote** 7.3.2

**Suggests** tidy, rnatualearth, dplyr, ggplot2, terra, ncdf4, scales,  
rmarkdown, covr, testthat, knitr

**VignetteBuilder** knitr

**Encoding** UTF-8

**NeedsCompilation** yes

**Author** Koen Hufkens [aut, cre] (ORCID:  
<<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5070-8109>>),  
BlueGreen Labs [cph, fnd]

**Repository** CRAN

**Date/Publication** 2025-11-17 09:40:02 UTC

Contents

skylight . . . . .	2
skylight_rcpp . . . . .	3
Index	4

---

skylight	<i>Sky illuminance values for the sun and moon</i>
----------	--

---

Description

Function returns sky illuminance parameters for both the sun and the moon, in addition to some ancillary parameters such as sun and moon azimuth and altitude.

Usage

```
skylight(.data, longitude, latitude, date, sky_condition = 1)
```

Arguments

.data	A data frame or data frame extension (e.g. a tibble) with named columns: longitude, latitude, date and optionally sky_condition
longitude	decimal longitude (single value or vector of values)
latitude	decimal latitude (single value or vector of values)
date	date and time in POSIXct format with GMT/UTC as time zone (single value or vector of values)
sky_condition	a positive value ( $\geq 1$ ) with which to scale illuminance values (1 = cloud cover < 30 3 = average clouds, 10 = dark stratus clouds). The value is set 1 (one) by default if missing (when all arguments are provided or should the column not be present in a data frame).

Details

The code is almost verbatim transcription of the work "Computer Programs for Sun and Moon Illuminance With Contingent Tables and Diagrams by Janiczek and DeYoung" and published in the US Naval observatory circular nr. 171, 1987.

Required parameters are a location (in longitude, latitude), and a date in POSIXct format set to the GMT/UTC time zone. Conversions to GMT/UTC should be done externally, errors are not trapped.

The original code has been vectorized, as such vectors of location, time and/or sky conditions can be provided.

Value

Sun and moon illuminance values (in lux), as well as their respective location in the sky (altitude, azimuth).

## Examples

```
# run the function on standard
# input variables (single values or vectors of equal size)
df <- skylight(
  longitude = -135.8,
  latitude = -23.4,
  date = as.POSIXct("1986-12-18 21:00:00", tz = "GMT"),
  sky_condition = 1
)

print(df)

# create data frame of input variables
input <- data.frame(
  longitude = 0,
  latitude = 50,
  date = as.POSIXct("2020-06-18 00:00:00", tz = "GMT") + seq(0, 1*24*3600, 1800),
  sky_condition = 1
)

# calculate on data frame
df <- skylight(input)

print(df)

# the above statement can also be used
# in a piped fashion in R >= 4.2
# input |> skylight()
```

---

skylight\_rcpp

*fast C++ implementation of the skylight model*

---

## Description

Calculates sky illuminance values faster. This function should not be called independently and the formal R skylight() function should be used with the parameter fast = TRUE!

## Usage

```
skylight_rcpp(forcing)
```

## Arguments

forcing	input matrix with forcing parameters organized as longitude, latitude, year, month, day, hour, minutes, sky_conditions
---------	--

## Value

sky illuminance results as a matrix

# Index

skylight, [2](#)  
skylight\_rcpp, [3](#)