

## 11.14: Parsec Vs. Light-Year Measurement

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Astronomers also employ other types of measurements, specifically the **parsec (pc)**. The parsec is defined as the distance to an object with a parallax angle of 1 arcsecond. This takes us back to our measurements using parallax. When determining the relationship between the *pc* and *ly*, one finds that: **1 pc = 3.261 light years (ly) = 1.9174 x 10<sup>12</sup> mi = 3.0857 x 10<sup>13</sup> km. M**

The parsec was named from the abbreviations of a **par**allax of one arc **sec**ond. The idea of the parsec was to provide astronomers a method to calculate stellar and other astronomical distances quickly and with ease from their data. The parsec is preferred by astronomers, whereas the light-year is more popular in science texts and everyday use.

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