

The Light Microscope

This optical instrument uses light and a series of glass lenses to create magnified images of tiny objects.



300 Years and Counting!

The first light microscopes were introduced to the study of biology by Dutch scientist Antonie van Leeuwenhoek in the 17th century. Since these early days of using sunlight as the illumination energy source (electricity had not yet been invented!), light microscopes have evolved into sophisticated tools for uncovering incredible aspects of life.

Capturing a Sliver of the Electromagnetic Spectrum

As you can probably guess, light microscopes use light as the illumination energy source. "Light" is technically electromagnetic radiation that we can see. Electromagnetic radiation is categorized based on photon wavelength (shown by the red line in the diagram below). Sometimes the light used as illumination energy is fluorescent, which expands beyond the visible light range (infrared to ultraviolet).

How do we categorize energy?

The Electromagnetic Spectrum is one way to categorize the types of energy that exists in the universe.



