UFO KANTEISHI EXAM

Grade 3

OFFICIAL GUIDE

Treating the unidentified correctly, as unidentified

ENGLISH EDITION



UFO KANTEISHI

CERTIFICATION BOARD

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Introduction

This is the Grade 3 Official Guide for UFO Kanteishi (certified UFO analyst). It teaches basic knowledge about UFOs and UAP from the standpoint of observation, recording, classification and analysis. (The certification has three grades, and Grade 1 is the highest.)

This guide does not treat UFOs as "alien spacecraft." It treats them as phenomena in the sky whose nature cannot be confirmed right away. What matters is not declaring what the unknown is, but checking the observation conditions and records, cross-checking against known phenomena and confirming the reliability of sources. In other words, it is the stance of treating the unidentified correctly: as unidentified.

The Thinking Behind This Certification

Grade 3 of the UFO Kanteishi Exam is a private (non-governmental) certification for learning the basics of history, observation, recording, classification, photo and video analysis, and information literacy concerning unidentified anomalous phenomena.

This certification does not vouch for the existence of extraterrestrial life, paranormal phenomena, special abilities or the ability to make contact, and it does not confer any such abilities. It is not a national or other public qualification, and it does not guarantee employment, income, contract work or professional expertise in analysis.

CHAPTER 1

What Are UFOs and UAP?

What you will learn in this chapter

- Understand the definitions of UFO and UAP, and how they differ
- Be able to clearly distinguish "unidentified" from "of extraterrestrial origin"
- Learn the roles of international investigating bodies and today's institutional frameworks

1-1 What Are UFOs and UAP?

In everyday talk, the word "UFO" is often used to mean "an alien spacecraft" or "a mysterious flying object." Its original meaning, however, is Unidentified Flying Object. The most important point here is that being "unidentified" and being "of extraterrestrial origin" mean completely different things.

When you see something in the sky and cannot tell right away what it is, that state is called "unidentified." "Unidentified" simply means that what it is cannot be determined at this point. The word "unidentified" does not carry meanings such as "it is unknown technology," "science cannot explain it" or "extraterrestrial life is involved."

Suppose, for example, that you see a white point of light in the night sky. It might be an aircraft flying far away. It might be a satellite or the International Space Station (ISS). It might be a train of Starlink satellites. It might be a bright planet such as Venus or Jupiter. Or it might be light captured in the picture because of a lens flare or a camera's night-mode processing. While its identity is unknown, any of these remains possible. "Unidentified" is the word for that state itself.

In recent years, the term UAP has also come into use as a concept close to UFO. UAP stands for Unidentified Anomalous Phenomena. Whereas "UFO" suggests a flying object, UAP came into use at government and research agencies as a term for a broader range of phenomena. In this guide, UAP is treated mainly as "phenomena observed in the air whose identity cannot be confirmed right away."

What you learn throughout this guide is not the ability to determine conclusively what a UFO or UAP is. It is a calm basic approach: when faced with a phenomenon that appears unidentified, organize the observation conditions, check the records and cross-check against known phenomena.

1-2 International Investigating Bodies and Frameworks

For a long time, investigations of UFOs and UAP were mainly the work of private groups and individual researchers. Since the 2020s, however, government agencies in several countries, led by the United States, have been putting systems in place for dealing with UAP officially.

NASA's UAP Independent Study Team

In 2022, NASA set up an independent study team to examine UAP scientifically, and in 2023 it published the team's final report. The report states clearly that there is no evidence pointing to an extraterrestrial origin for UAP, while repeatedly pointing out that the data currently available are fragmentary and that standardized observation methods and high-quality data are needed to reach scientific conclusions. The significance of NASA's involvement in UAP research is not "searching for aliens." It lies in bringing scientific methods such as aviation safety, atmospheric observation, sensor technology and data analysis into UAP research, and building a reliable foundation for investigation. (NASA Science)

AARO (All-domain Anomaly Resolution Office)

AARO is short for All-domain Anomaly Resolution Office, an organization set up by the US Department of Defense in 2022. Its purpose is to deal with unidentified phenomena across all domains (in space, in the air, under the sea, and moving between these domains), and it collects and analyzes UAP reports from the military and intelligence agencies. In its 2024 report, AARO concluded that no US government investigation so far has found verified evidence that UAP sightings represent extraterrestrial technology. (AARO)

Developments in other countries and Project Blue Book

In Japan, too, institutional responses have begun: for example, Japan's Ministry of Defense has drawn up procedures for Self-Defense Forces personnel to follow when they encounter UAP. In the United Kingdom, France, Canada, Brazil and elsewhere, government agencies have released UFO-related documents they collected, but no country has officially announced that it has "confirmed extraterrestrial origin."

Project Blue Book (1952–1969), the US Air Force's UFO investigation, recorded 12,618 UFO reports covering 1947 to 1969 (including those of its predecessor projects), and 701 of them were left as "Unidentified." According to the Air Force fact sheet published by the US National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), these unidentified cases also showed no evidence of extraterrestrial origin, and most of them are said to have remained unidentified because of insufficient information or poor observation conditions. The number of unidentified cases reflects a lack of information, not an amount of evidence. (National Archives)

Chapter 1 Summary

1. UFO stands for "unidentified flying object." It is not a word that means an alien spacecraft.
2. "Unidentified" refers to "a state in which what something is remains unknown." It does not mean extraterrestrial origin.
3. UAP is a broader concept that covers unidentified phenomena in general.
4. Public agencies such as NASA and AARO investigate UAP scientifically.
5. At present, there is no official evidence that any public agency has confirmed extraterrestrial technology.
6. In examining UFOs and UAP, observation, recording and cross-checking against known phenomena are what matter.

Mini Check

Chapter 1 · The answer is shown below each question

Q1 **Which best describes the original meaning of "UFO"?**

- **A** Unidentified flying object
- **B** A vehicle of extraterrestrial beings
- **C** A phenomenon that science cannot deal with
- **D** An object the government is covering up

▸ **Answer: A**

Q2 **Which challenge did the final report of NASA's UAP Independent Study Team particularly emphasize?**

- **A** That a large amount of evidence of extraterrestrial origin was found
- **B** That the quality and quantity of observational data are insufficient
- **C** That Japan's observation system lags behind
- **D** That the word "UFO" should be abolished

▸ **Answer: B**

Q3 **What was the main reason 701 cases were left as "Unidentified" in Project Blue Book?**

- **A** Because all of them were confirmed to be of extraterrestrial origin
- **B** Because insufficient information or poor observation conditions made it impossible to determine what they were
- **C** Because the military deliberately covered up the records
- **D** Because the technology of the time made video recording impossible

▸ **Answer: B**

CHAPTER 2

Known Phenomena Seen in the Sky

What you will learn in this chapter

- Gain a systematic understanding of the typical known phenomena that are often mistaken for UFOs
- Be able to compare aircraft, celestial objects, weather phenomena and optical phenomena as candidates
- Learn not to decide what something is from a single feature

2-1 Aircraft, Drones and Satellites

Many of the things reported as unidentified anomalous phenomena are in fact aircraft or drones. At night or at long distances, shapes become hard to make out and only the colors of the lights and their blinking patterns catch the eye, so to someone unfamiliar with them they can seem like lights of unknown origin.

An aircraft flying at night shows position lights: red on the left side, green on the right side and white at the tail. However, how the colors and blinking look to an observer changes greatly with distance, angle, weather and shooting conditions. Aircraft approaching from straight ahead need particular care. Because their course hardly changes, they can appear almost motionless for a long time. Then, when the angle changes, they can look as if they have suddenly started moving sideways. This is not anomalous motion; it happens because the viewing angle has changed. Also, sound does not carry well over long distances, so you cannot rule out an aircraft just because "there was no sound."

Drones can stop, move and change direction at low altitude, and at night only their lights stand out, so they can look like glowing objects moving erratically.

Satellites and the ISS are visible because they reflect sunlight, so they are easiest to see after sunset or before sunrise. They are seen as white points of light that do not blink and move in a straight line at a constant speed. For some time after launch, SpaceX's Starlink satellites can look like several points of light moving in a line. If the date, time, location and direction of a photo or video were recorded, ISS and satellite passes can be cross-checked afterward with dedicated prediction services.

2-2 Celestial Objects, Weather Phenomena and Balloons

Planets (Venus and Jupiter) are very bright and stand out in the western sky in the evening and the eastern sky before dawn. When they are low in the sky, the atmosphere can make them appear to waver or change color. When they slip in and out of view through gaps in the clouds, they can seem to be "repeat-

edly appearing and disappearing." For a bright light that stays in nearly the same position for a long time, first consider a planet or a star as a candidate.

Typical weather-related phenomena are light pillars and sun dogs. A light pillar is an atmospheric optical phenomenon in which ice crystals falling through the air reflect light, so the light appears to stretch up and down like a pillar. At night, artificial light such as streetlights can reflect off ice crystals and look like several pillars of light standing in the sky. A sun dog (parhelion) is a phenomenon in which bright lights appear on either side of the sun, and under some conditions it can look as if there are several light sources in the sky.

Radiosonde weather balloons are launched regularly by the Japan Meteorological Agency (JMA) at sites across Japan. After sunset or before dawn they can catch sunlight high in the sky and shine, looking like bright points of light from the ground. Because they drift at high altitude for a long time, they are sometimes reported as unfamiliar lights or objects.

2-3 Optical Artifacts

"Optical artifacts" that appear in photos and videos need particular attention as a cause of UFO misidentification. Because of the characteristics of a camera, lights and shapes that do not actually exist in the sky can be recorded.

A lens flare is a phenomenon in which strong light entering the lens produces rings, streaks, spots or smears of light in a photo or video. If a point of light moves along with the camera within the frame when you move the camera, suspect a lens flare. Also consider this possibility first when a point of light appears only in the photo even though it was not seen with the naked eye.

Being out of focus, or camera shake, can make a light source that is really a point appear as a large circle, ring or oval. This is sometimes taken for a "disc-shaped object." Camera shake can also stretch a point of light into a line or make it look as if it moved suddenly.

Compression noise and AI enhancement also need care. Footage posted on social media and video platforms loses fine detail through file compression, and shapes or patterns that were not originally there can appear. AI enhancement, enlargement (upscaling) and sharpening can also emphasize outlines and structures that were never there. Avoid judging what something is from processed images alone, and give priority to comparing them with the original data.

Chapter 2 Summary

1. Many of the phenomena mistaken for UFOs are aircraft, drones, satellites, celestial objects or weather phenomena.
2. At night or at long distances, even known objects can look like lights of unknown origin.
3. You cannot determine what something is from the color, movement or brightness of a light alone.
4. Photos and videos can show apparent anomalies caused by lens flares, being out of focus, camera shake, image processing and so on.
5. It is important not to reach conclusions from footage alone, but to examine it together with information such as the date, time, location and direction of the observation.

Mini Check

Chapter 2 · The answer is shown below each question

Q4 **Which best describes how an aircraft approaching from straight ahead can look?**

- **A** It always appears to move fast
- **B** It can appear almost motionless for a long time
- **C** Its red and green lights are always visible
- **D** Its sound can always be heard

▸ **Answer: B**

Q5 **A point of light appears only in a photo and was not seen with the naked eye. What should you consider first?**

- **A** A glowing object of extraterrestrial origin
- **B** An optical artifact such as a lens flare or lens ghost
- **C** A weather balloon
- **D** A pass of the ISS

▸ **Answer: B**

Q6 **A bright light stays visible in the western sky in the evening for a long time. Which candidate should you consider first?**

- **A** A drone
- **B** A fireball
- **C** A lens flare
- **D** A bright planet such as Venus

▸ **Answer: D**

CHAPTER 3

The Right Attitude for Seeing Correctly

What you will learn in this chapter

- Understand how cognitive biases affect observation and judgment
- Learn the basics of evaluating how reliable a source is
- Understand the limits of information from social media and videos, and handle it appropriately

3-1 The Basics of Cognitive Bias

Human judgment is not always objective. Experience, emotion and preconceptions can distort it without our noticing. Such biases in thinking are called cognitive biases.

Confirmation bias is the tendency to seek out information that supports what one already believes, and to ignore or play down information that contradicts it. If you watch footage already convinced that "this is a UFO," you tend to notice the points that are hard to explain rather than what it has in common with known phenomena. Not rushing to conclusions and examining known phenomena one by one is an effective way to deal with confirmation bias.

Pareidolia is a perceptual phenomenon in which faces or meaningful shapes are seen in irregular patterns or ambiguous forms. If a point of light whose outline has broken down because of compression noise or being out of focus makes you feel that "there is a disc-shaped structure" or "I can see window-like patterns," pareidolia may be at work. Images processed by AI enhancement or upscaling can emphasize shapes that were not really there, which makes pareidolia even more likely.

Testimony contamination is another important problem. When a witness encounters news, social media or other people's accounts after a sighting, content that differs from the first impression can get mixed into memory. The basic stance for reading testimony is to understand that memory is not a recording but something that keeps being updated.

Do not forget, too, that bias works not only in the direction of believing too much but also in the direction of dismissing too much. NASA's independent study report pointed out that social prejudice (stigma) surrounding UAP may stand in the way of high-quality reports. (NASA Science) In addition, if you start from assumptions such as "the government is hiding something" or "the official explanation is a lie," it becomes harder to accept an explanation even for cases that can be explained as known phenomena. Being aware of what images and preconceptions you yourself hold improves the quality of your observations, records and analysis.

3-2 Evaluating Sources and Handling Social Media

UFO and UAP information ranges very widely in reliability, from official reports by government agencies to individuals' social media posts. When you receive information, the first question to ask is: "Who is saying this, and on what basis?"

A primary source is the information closest to the event, such as the unedited original file kept by the person who took it, or original documents released by a public agency. A secondary source is information that someone has edited, explained or presented based on a primary source, such as a news article or a repost on social media. Do not believe either unconditionally; it is important to make a habit of checking what stages the information has passed through.

A strong headline is not the same as strong evidence. Words such as "decisive evidence," "completely inexplicable" or "the government finally releases" attract attention, but when you read the article itself, it often says no more than "it is possible" or "one expert said."

When you use a UFO video from social media for analysis, always check whether the date and time, location and direction of the recording, and the original data, can be confirmed. A clipped video has lost the context of what came before and after. Even if something in it seems to "accelerate suddenly," seeing the surrounding footage may show that the person filming simply swung the camera sharply. Many people in a comment section saying "it's a UFO" is not proof that it is something special.

When reading a scientific report, read not only the conclusion but also what it says about methodology, the scope of the data and limitations. The statement "no evidence of extraterrestrial origin has been confirmed" does not deny that anything of extraterrestrial origin exists; it means that none could be confirmed within the scope of investigation so far. "No evidence" and "does not exist" mean different things.

Chapter 3 Summary

1. Human judgment is affected by cognitive biases, so it is important to keep objectivity in mind.
2. Confirmation bias and pareidolia easily lead to misidentifications and misunderstandings of UFOs and UAP.
3. Memories and testimony can change, so you cannot reach a conclusion from testimony alone.
4. When evaluating information, check "who is putting it out, and on what basis."
5. Social media and videos are only one kind of reference material; what matters is checking the original data and the observation information.
6. "No evidence" and "does not exist" mean different things; base your conclusions on the data.

Mini Check Chapter 3 · The answer is shown below each question

Q7 **Which best describes confirmation bias?**

- **A** The tendency to judge rare events as more important than they really are
- **B** The tendency to go along with the majority opinion of a group
- **C** The tendency to believe statements by authority figures unconditionally
- **D** The tendency to favor information that supports one's beliefs and play down information that contradicts them

▸ **Answer: D**

Q8 **When you use a UFO video from social media for analysis, what should you check first?**

- **A** The video's view count and the reactions in the comment section
- **B** The poster's follower count
- **C** Whether the date and time, location, direction and original data of the recording are available
- **D** The video's background music and editing style

▸ **Answer: C**

Q9 **What is the correct way to read the statement "no evidence of extraterrestrial origin has been confirmed"?**

- **A** The existence of anything of extraterrestrial origin has been ruled out
- **B** All UAP have been explained as known phenomena
- **C** The investigation is complete and a final conclusion has been reached
- **D** No evidence of extraterrestrial origin could be confirmed within the scope of investigation so far

▸ **Answer: D**

CHAPTER 4

The Board's A–F Classification

What you will learn in this chapter

- Understand the thinking behind the Board's A–F classification system
- Learn a basic classification flow that matches the amount of information available
- Understand that "undeterminable due to insufficient information" is an honest conclusion

4-1 Overview of the Classification System

The UFO Kanteishi Certification Board (the Board) uses the A–F classification as its standard for organizing and classifying unidentified anomalous phenomena. This classification is not an official classification of public agencies such as NASA or AARO. It is the Board's own system, designed for study and practical use.

The basic idea behind its design is not "guessing what it is" but "organizing what can be said at present." Choosing a class that matches the amount of information is the starting point of honest analysis.

Class	Meaning
A	Likely to be identified as a specific known phenomenon and cross-checked against it
B	Likely to be an artificial object (aircraft, drone, satellite, etc.)
C	Likely to be a natural, meteorological or astronomical phenomenon
D	Likely to be a photographic or optical effect
E	Undeterminable due to insufficient information
F	Does not fit known categories even when a reasonable amount of information is available

At Grade 3, the most important class is E. Being able to say accurately "I don't know" when information is lacking is a very important skill for preventing mistaken conclusions. F, unlike E, is a class to be used with care, and only when the date and time, location, direction, shooting conditions and so on are reasonably complete and the case is still hard to explain after thorough cross-checking against known phenomena. F does not mean extraterrestrial origin.

4-2 A Basic Classification Flow

When classifying, consider the following in order. It is important not to skip any step.

Step 1 Check the information

Can the date and time, location, direction, duration and shooting conditions be confirmed?
If they are unknown, no cross-check is possible. → E (Undeterminable due to insufficient information)

Step 2 Cross-check against known phenomena

Cross-check against aircraft, drones, satellites, the ISS, celestial objects, weather phenomena, optical phenomena and so on.
Is there a candidate that can explain it? If cross-checking progresses and a candidate can be identified → A

Step 3 Judge the general direction of the candidates

Likely an artificial object → B
Likely a natural, meteorological or astronomical phenomenon → C
Likely a photographic or optical effect → D

Step 4 If it is still hard to explain

Only if the information is reasonably complete and the case does not fit B, C or D → F

Classifying a case as F while information is still lacking is a mistake. E and F mean completely different things.

4-3 Basics of Recording and Reporting

Recording what was observed accurately is essential as the basis for classification. The basic items a record should include are what was seen, when, where, in which direction and for how long. Information without these cannot be cross-checked at all. Do not include impressions or interpretations at this stage; first write down only what can be recorded as observed fact.

Expressions such as "it was big" or "it was incredibly fast" are hard to use in analysis unless the distance or something to compare it with is known. Where possible, make them concrete, for example: "its apparent size was about X times that of the full moon" or "it took X seconds to pass." Including the observation conditions (weather, moonlight, the brightness of the surroundings, the equipment used) in the record also makes it useful information for cross-checking later.

What Grade 3 asks of you is not to complete a full report, but to build basic recording habits like these. If your records are of high quality, the information keeps its value when it is later handed on to analysts at higher grades or to experts.

Chapter 4 Summary

1. The A–F classification is the Board's own system, designed for study and practical use.
2. The purpose of classification is not to determine conclusively what something is, but to organize what is known at present.
3. Classification proceeds in the order "check the information → cross-check against known phenomena → classify."
4. When information is insufficient, classify the case as E (undeterminable).
5. Use F only when there is sufficient information and the case is hard to explain with the known classes.
6. F does not mean "extraterrestrial origin."
7. Records of the date and time, location, direction, duration and so on are important for accurate classification.

Mini Check

Chapter 4 · The answer is shown below each question

Q10 **Which best describes the design principle behind the Board's A–F classification?**

- **A** Determining whether something is of extraterrestrial origin
- **B** It is a classification system that only experts can use
- **C** Organizing what can be said at present, according to the amount of information
- **D** It is a Japanese translation of NASA's official classification

▸ **Answer: C**

Q11 **Which best describes the difference between class E and class F?**

- **A** E refers to artificial objects and F to natural phenomena
- **B** E means undeterminable due to insufficient information; F is used when the case does not fit the known classes even though a reasonable amount of information is available
- **C** Both E and F mean extraterrestrial origin
- **D** F is a less reliable class than E

▸ **Answer: B**

Q12 **What should be checked first in the classification flow?**

- **A** The number of comments on social media
- **B** The witness's occupation
- **C** Whether the date and time, location, direction, duration and shooting conditions can be confirmed
- **D** The video's view count

▸ **Answer: C**

Summary of This Guide

"Treat the unidentified correctly: as unidentified."
This does not ask you to explain away every phenomenon as a known one.
Nor does it encourage you to find special meaning in every unidentified phenomenon.
It means valuing an honest process: carefully cross-check what can be identified, record what cannot be identified as it is, unidentified, and pass it on to the next stage of analysis.

Three Attitudes the Board Values

1. Do not jump to conclusions — Drawing strong conclusions when information is lacking leads to mistakes. Choosing wording that matches the amount of information is the foundation of analysis.
2. Separate observed facts from impressions — Expressions such as "it was huge" or "it was unbelievably fast" contain subjective judgment. Separating what can be recorded as fact from what should be recorded as impression leads to high-quality records.
3. Examine known phenomena first, in order — Start by cross-checking known candidates such as aircraft, satellites, celestial objects, weather phenomena and photographic effects. Examining the candidates that can be confirmed, one by one, brings the cases that are truly hard to explain clearly into view.

References

1 Final report of NASA's UAP Independent Study Team

- Publisher: National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), US
- Title: UAP Independent Study Team Final Report
- Published: 2023
- URL: https://science.nasa.gov/uap/

A scientific report by the independent study team that NASA set up. It sets out the definition of UAP, the current state of the data, recommendations for improving observation methods and the role NASA can play. While stating that no evidence of extraterrestrial origin has been confirmed, it repeatedly points out that the data currently available are fragmentary and that their quality is a problem. This guide refers to it as a model of a scientific, neutral report on UAP.

2 Official AARO (All-domain Anomaly Resolution Office) materials

- Publisher: All-domain Anomaly Resolution Office (AARO), US Department of Defense
- Title: AARO official website, historical report and annual reports
- Published: 2022 onward (updated as needed)
- URL: https://www.aaro.mil/

Official materials of the All-domain Anomaly Resolution Office, which the US Department of Defense set up in 2022. They include a historical review of Projects SIGN, GRUDGE and Blue Book, current figures on UAP reports and how many have been resolved, and an analytical framework. This guide refers to them as a primary source for understanding how the military and government agencies currently deal with UAP at an institutional level.

3 Project Blue Book documents

- Publisher: National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), US
- Title: Project Blue Book / Air Force UFO Documents
- Published: Original records 1947–1969; released on an ongoing basis since
- URL: https://www.archives.gov/research/military/air-force/ufos

Official records of Project Blue Book, the US Air Force's UFO investigation (1952–1969; the records cover 1947–1969). They include the records of 12,618 reports, investigation methods, classification results and the Air Force fact sheet. This guide refers to them as a representative primary source in the history of UFO and UAP investigation. Every mention of "National Archives" in this guide refers to this source.

Colophon

- Title: UFO Kanteishi Exam — Grade 3 Official Guide, English Edition
- Publisher: UFO Kanteishi Certification Board, operated by 株式会社アンドアール
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Translated from the Japanese edition.