Dobsonian Telescopes Made Real Easy

1. Don’t look at the sun.
2. Remove telescope covers, insert finder in bracket and tighten:

3. Insert longer eyepiece into focuser.
4. Grab Telescope (at ‘Grab Here’; not the focuser or finder) and point (push, pull, shove, as needed) at some nearby terrestrial object. e.g. A street light, a house window, a tall tree, a chimney, etc. Turn the focus wheel until objects are clear enough to see. Center scope on chosen object.
5. Adjust two screws on finder until cross hairs visible in finder are centered on object visible through scope. Double check to make sure the scope is still pointed where you want. This adjustment should be checked every time the scope is used. The adjustment will hold pretty well if the scope is not bumped hard.
6. Find the desired object in the sky and center in the finder scope cross hairs.
7. Focus the eyepiece to get a clear view. When sharpest, the object will be smallest!
8. Change eyepieces to the shorter one. This will approximately double the power, making the object appear twice as big. The lower power is 36x and the higher is 91x. That makes things that much bigger or appear that much closer.
9. The telescope magnification ‘magnifies’ the appearance of the Earth’s rotation. An object will only stay centered in the eyepiece for a minute or two before the scope has to be moved to follow the object across the sky (the spin of the earth makes objects in the sky move from East to West)
10. Remember, the telescope gives an upside down view (but the finder is right side up). At first it may seem that the telescope moves in the ‘wrong’ direction when you push it. Just remember, that to follow objects you have to push the scope in the direction that the object moves across the sky (i.e. to the west). You will quickly get the hang of it.
11. Observe the moon first. Then use a ‘planetarium’ program to find what bright planets are out and try to find and observe them.
   a. Saturn: rings and brightest moon Titan can be seen.
   b. Jupiter: a few cloud belts and up to 4 bright moons can be seen (some may be hiding behind or in front of the planet at any given time).
   c. Venus: at twilight, with a dark blue sky to reduce glare, Venus can be observed to have phases similar to the moon, e.g. half Venus or crescent Venus.
   d. Mars: generally just a tiny red ball; maybe with skill and the right time of year, a polar cap and few dusky markings are visible.
   e. Uranus: a tiny greenish disk can be seen on high power, showing it to be a planet and not a star. (Uranus is not visible to the naked eye from the city. It will take considerable skill to find.
12. Look at some bright stars. Can you see the subtle differences in their colors?
13. Find Polaris, the North Star. Can you see its faint companion. This is a true double with each star orbiting around the other. Depending on the time of night, the faint companion could be at any position.