



The first step to stargazing is simple: look up. Take time to observe the night sky. You don't need any equipment. Notice the position of the sun or the moon, or try to locate these celestial hotspots:

1. BIG DIPPER

It's easy to spot the Big Dipper, a bright star pattern shaped like a bowl and handle. The Big Dipper helps point you to Polaris and the Little Dipper.

2. POLARIS (NORTH STAR)

From the Big Dipper, follow the two stars on the outer edge of the bowl and trace a line up toward the next relatively bright star in the sky. That's Polaris—the North Star, which is always due north.

3. LITTLE DIPPER

From Polaris, it's easy to find the Little Dipper (aka Ursa Minor). Polaris is at the end of the handle of the Little Dipper.

4. PEGASUS

Follow the same line from the pointers of the Big Dipper past Polaris, and you'll reach a large square of four bright stars that form the body of Pegasus, the mythical winged horse.

5. CASSIOPEIA

Look for Cassiopeia, a bright W-shaped star formation. Trace a line from the last star in the Big Dipper's handle through and past Polaris. Both the Big Dipper and Cassiopeia circle around Polaris (on opposite sides).