

16.13: Star Chart and Sky Event Resources Index (Appendix M)

Star Charts

To obtain graphic charts of the sky over your head tonight, there are a number of free online resources.

- One of the easiest is at the Skymaps website: <http://www.skymaps.com/downloads.html>. Here you can print out a free PDF version of the northern sky (for roughly latitude 40°, which is reasonable for much of the United States). Maps of the sky from the equator and the southern hemisphere can also be printed.
- Sky charts and other summaries of astronomical information can also be found at <http://www.heavens-above.com/>.
- A free, open-source computer application that shows the sky at any time from any place is called Stellarium. You can find it at <http://www.stellarium.org/>.
- Appendix B provides a section of information for finding astronomy apps for cell phones and tablets. Many of these also provide star charts. If you have a smartphone, you can find a variety of inexpensive apps that allow you to simply hold your phone upward to see what is in the sky behind your phone.
- A *planisphere* is a sky chart that turns inside a round frame and can show you the night sky at your latitude on any date and time of the year. You can buy them at science supply and telescope stores or online. Or you can construct your own from templates at these two websites:
 - Dennis Schatz's AstroAdventures Star Finder: <http://dennisschatz.org/activities/Star%20Finder.pdf>
 - Uncle Al's Star Wheel: http://www.lawrencehallofscience.org/do_science_now/science_apps_and_activities/starwheels

Calendars of Night Sky Events

The following resources offer calendars of night sky events.

- Sea and Sky: <http://www.seasky.org/astronomy/astronomy.html> (click on the fourth menu button)
- Sky & Telescope's This Week's Sky at a Glance: <http://www.skyandtelescope.com/observing/sky-at-a-glance/>
- Astronomy Magazine's The Sky This Week: <http://www.astronomy.com/observing/sky-this-week>
- NASA Sky Cal: <http://eclipse.gsfc.nasa.gov/SKYCAL/SKYCAL.html>
- Night Sky Network Sky Planner: <https://nightsky.jpl.nasa.gov/planner.cfm>

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