Starmap

JULY/AUGUST 2026

MARYLAND SCIENCE CENTER
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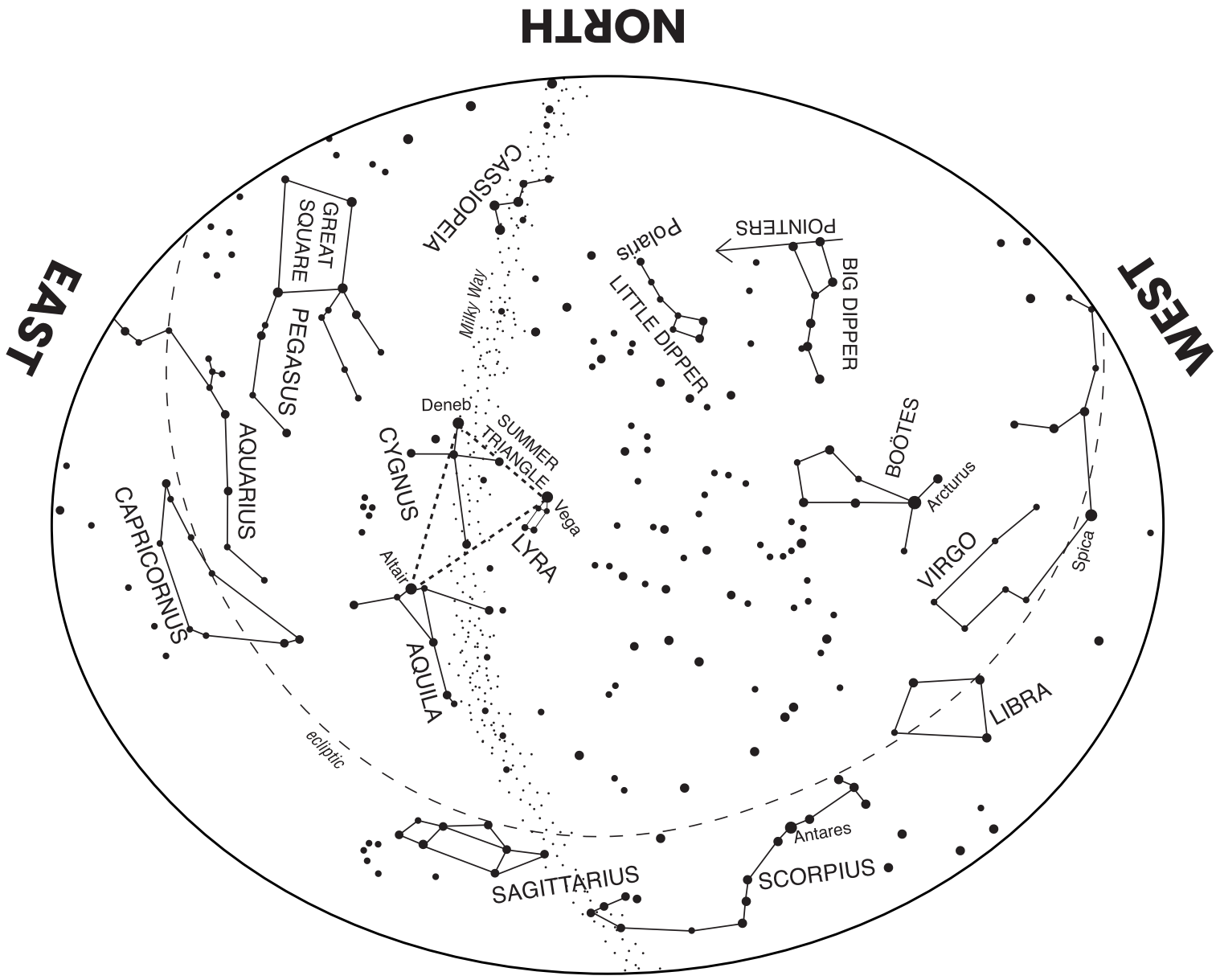

TO USE MAP:

Hold the map in front of you so that the direction you are facing is on the bottom. The stars on the lower half on the map will match up with the stars in the sky. The center of the map is directly overhead in the sky. Constellation and star pattern names are all capitalized. Names of stars have only the first letter capitalized. The map is valid within an hour of:

11:30pm Mid-July EDT
9:30pm Mid-August EDT

MAGNITUDE is a measure of a star's brightness. The lower the number, the brighter the star.

- 1st or brighter magnitude star
- 2nd magnitude star
- 3rd magnitude star
- 4th or fainter magnitude star

ECLIPTIC:

The imaginary path of the Sun through the year. Constellations of the zodiac surround the ecliptic and the Moon and planets appear along it.

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IN THE JULY/AUGUST SKY

◑ **July 7**
Last Quarter Moon near Saturn
(See Celestial Highlights)

July 11
Moon near Mars

● **July 14**
New Moon

July 17
Moon near Venus

◐ **July 21**
First Quarter Moon

○ **July 29**
Full Moon

August 3
Moon near Saturn

August 4
Mercury at its highest point
(See Celestial Highlights)

◑ **August 5**
Last Quarter Moon

August 9
Moon near Mars

● **August 12**
New Moon
Partial Solar Eclipse
(See Celestial Highlights)

August 13
Mercury near Jupiter
Perseid meteor shower peaks
(See Celestial Highlights)

August 16
Moon near Venus

◐ **August 19**
First Quarter Moon

August 26
Moon near Mars

○ **August 27**
Full Moon
Partial Lunar Eclipse
(See Celestial Highlights)

August 31
Moon near Saturn

CELESTIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Planet and Moon Groupings – On the mornings of July 7th, August 3rd, and August 31st, Saturn will be the brightest object near the Moon. Before sunrise on July 11th and August 9th, Mars shines near a crescent Moon. The crescent Moon joins Venus setting in the western sky the evenings of July 17th and August 16th. In the hour before sunrise on August 13th, Jupiter and Mercury can be spotted close to each other on the eastern horizon.

Mercury Visibility – Mercury is one of the most difficult planets to observe due to its proximity to the Sun, which typically outshines the small planet. On August 4th look for Mercury in the east at its highest point in the sky just before sunrise.

Eclipses – Eclipses almost always come in pairs, during the semiannual 30+ day period when the Sun, Moon, and Earth are in alignment. A New Moon during such an "eclipse season" produces a solar eclipse, like the August 12th event that will completely block the Sun for viewers in Spain and Greenland. For viewers in Baltimore, only 4% of the Sun will be blocked at 1:47 p.m. and is only visible with safe solar viewing equipment. The Full Moon two weeks later will produce a partial lunar eclipse with up to 93% of the Moon covered by Earth's shadow. From 11:35 p.m. to 1:53 a.m. on August 27/28th the Moon will redden and darken, easily observable from wherever you can see the Moon.

Perseid Meteor Shower – As a comet moves through the solar system, it leaves behind a trail of debris particles. When the Earth passes through the trail during its orbit these left behind particles hit the Earth's atmosphere and burn up, creating the fantastical sight of shooting stars. The meteor shower is visible throughout August and reaches peak activity on August 13th with an estimated 140 meteors per hour! The meteor shower is visible all night, and the Moon will provide minimal interference.

The Observatory at the Maryland Science Center offers safe solar viewing on Saturdays from 10:30am - 12:00pm and 1:00pm-4:00pm, weather permitting (included with Science Center admission).

The bi-monthly STARMAP is available on the web at https://www.mdsci.org/planetarium

MERCURY

When:
Visible early August before sunrise

Where:
Eastern horizon

Constellation:
Gemini, Cancer

VENUS

When:
Visible after sunset

Where:
Western horizon

Constellation:
Leo, Virgo

MARS

When:
Visible early morning

Where:
Eastern sky

Constellation:
Taurus, Gemini

JUPITER

When:
Visible late August before sunrise

Where:
Eastern horizon

Constellation:
Cancer

SATURN

When:
July, after midnight
August, in the evening

Where:
South-eastern sky

Constellation:
Pisces