

Celestial Navigation Tips

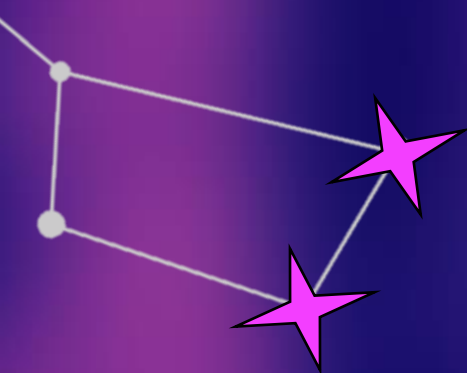
THE BIG DIPPER

FIND THE BIG DIPPER

The Big Dipper is a grouping of seven stars that resembles a ladle or a pot. It is an asterism (collection of stars) inside of the constellation, Ursa Major.



IDENTIFY THE POINTER STARS



The two stars in the bowl of the dipper are known as the "pointer stars" because they will help us point to the North Star. Identify these two stars in the sky.

FIND THE DISTANCE

Look at the distance between these two pointer stars. Multiply this length by five and move that far away from the top pointer star. You will land on the North Star, or Polaris.



THE NORTH STAR

It's a common misconception that the North Star is the brightest star in the sky. The best way to find it is to follow this method of using the pointer stars and not by looking for the brightest star (Sirius). The North Star is also the last star in the Little Dipper.



NORTH, SOUTH, EAST, AND WEST

If you draw a line from the North Star to the horizon, you have identified the direction North. Exactly opposite on the horizon is South. Where are East and West? You can easily find your way without a GPS!

