

Directions – Night

Big Dipper / Little Dipper / North Star

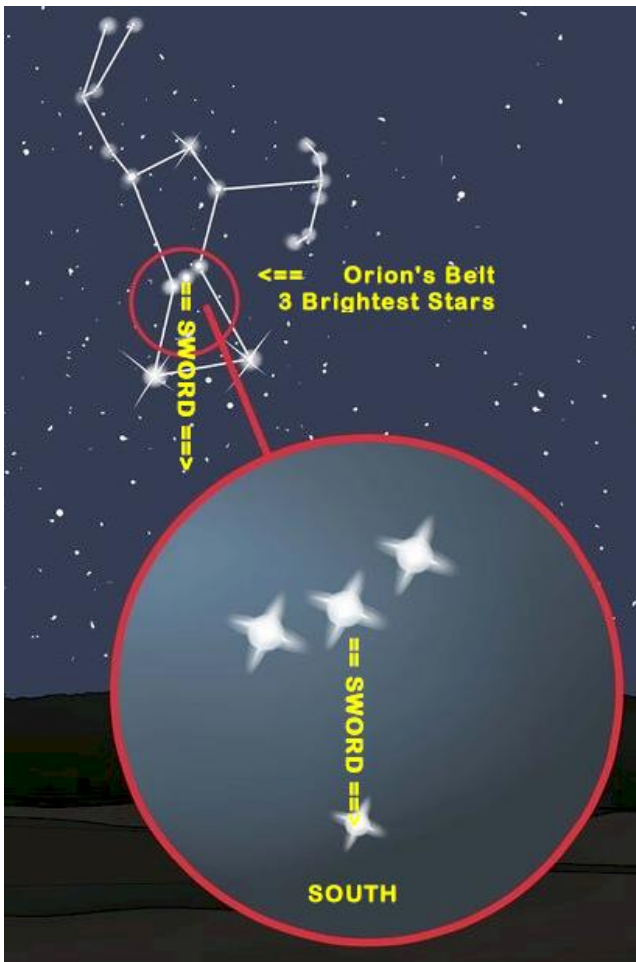
Probably the most accurate and quickest method in the Northern Hemisphere.

- 1) Find the “Big Dipper”.
- 2) Use the “pointer stars” that make-up the “bowl” of the “Big Dipper” to find the “Little Dipper”.
- 3) The “tail” of the “Little Dipper” is Polaris – The North Star.

Added Note – Once you’ve found the NORTH STAR:

The ANGLE that the North Star is above the horizon is the same as your LATITUDE. You can measure this with a couple of different methods – but the quickest and easiest is with your hand. Outstretch your arm and make a fist. Measure how many “fists” the North Star is above the horizon. Each “fist” is roughly 10 degrees.

Kansas City sits at 39 North. Smithville sits at about 40 North. The North Star should be about 4 “fists” above the horizon.



Orion's Sword

Locate the constellation “Orion” in the night sky – specifically “Orion's Belt”. Now, find the sword that hangs below the belt. Draw a line from the middle star of the belt to the tip of the sword. That direction is “generally south”.

The closer “Orion's Belt” is to being horizontal – the closer this is to “Due South”.

Side Note – Hitch Your Wagon to a Star

Did you ever hear the phrase to “hitch your wagon to a star”? It is often attributed to Ralph Waldo Emerson and usually is interpreted to mean to set your goals high and then strive to hit them. Though good advice, the phrase actually dates further back to the earliest pioneers and explorers. Each night, they would scan the heavens to find the North Star – like you just did. Then, they'd point the tongue of their wagon – or whatever they had available – towards the North Star - i.e. – “hitching their wagon to a star”. So that in the morning, they'd be able to determine what direction they needed to go.

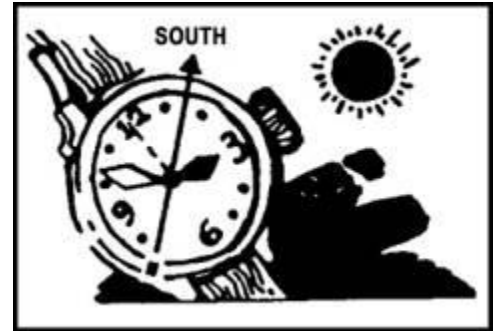
Directions – Daytime

Clock Face

Using an “old-fashioned” analog watch with hands. If you don’t have one – imagine one or draw one on a paper plate.

- 1) Place the face of the dial flat.
- 2) Rotate the watch (keeping it flat) until the hour hand points at the sun.
- 3) The direction SOUTH is half-way between the hour hand and the “12”.

You’d have to adjust for Daylight Saving Time.



Shadow-Stick Method

- 1) Push a 3-ft stick into the ground. (Try to put the stick straight up-down)
 - 2) Mark where the tip of its shadow is.
 - 3) Wait about 15 – 20 minutes.
 - 4) Mark where the shadow is now.
 - 5) A line from the first point to the second point will go EAST.
- SO . . .
- 6) Stand with your LEFT toes on the mark you LEFT. (The first mark)
 - 7) Stand with your RIGHT toes on the mark when you come RIGHT back. (The second mark)
 - 8) Your NOSE will point NORTH.

NOTE: This same method will work at-night using the Moon – provided it is bright-enough to cast a shadow. Same process, same results. Same reason. The earth revolves in the same direction – day or night. So the shadow will always move in this fashion.

