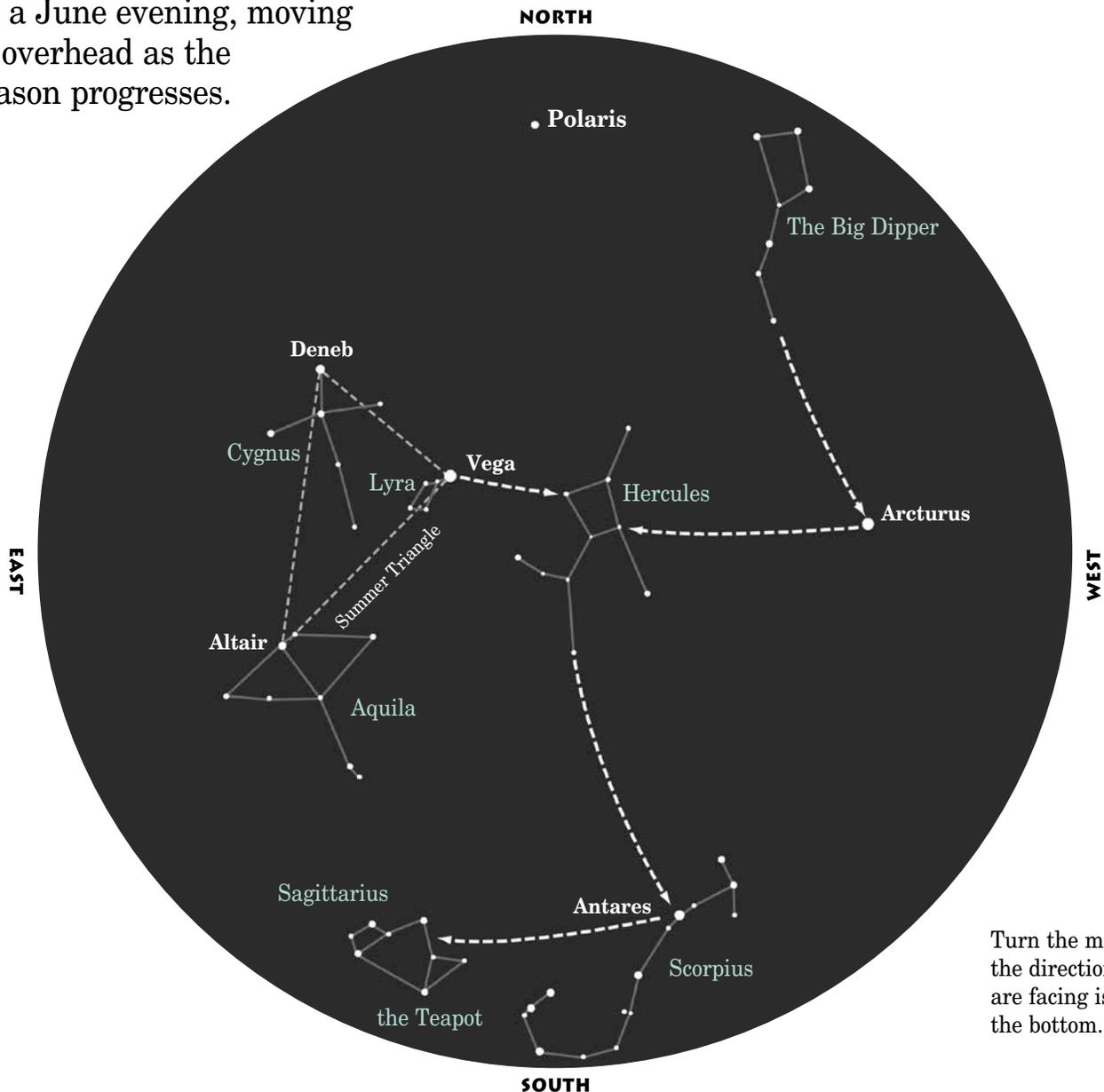


GET OUTSIDE

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN THE SUMMER SKY

Your hosts of the summer sky are three bright stars — Vega, Altair and Deneb. Together they make up the Summer Triangle. Look for the triangle in the east on a June evening, moving to overhead as the season progresses.



Turn the map so the direction you are facing is at the bottom.

GET OUTSIDE

VEGA

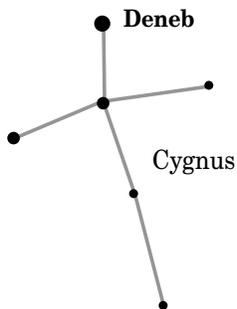
The brightest star in the Summer Triangle, Vega is bluish white. It is in the constellation Lyra, the Harp.

ALTAIR

The second-brightest star in the triangle, Altair is white. Altair is in the constellation Aquila, the Eagle.

DENEB

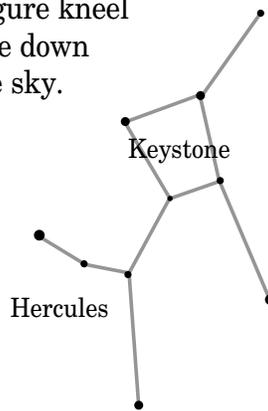
The dimmest star of the Summer Triangle, Deneb would be the brightest if it were not so far away. It is actually 60 000 times brighter than our Sun. Deneb is the tail of the large constellation Cygnus, the Swan. The head of Cygnus lies between Altair and Vega. Some people call Cygnus “the Northern Cross.”



Once you have found the Summer Triangle, you can star hop to find ...

THE KEYSTONE

Between Vega and Arcturus, look for four stars in a wedge or keystone shape. This is the body of Hercules, the Strongman. His feet are to the north and his arms to the south, making his figure kneel upside down in the sky.

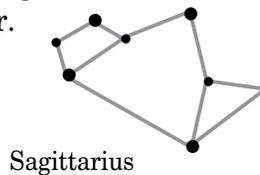


ANTARES

Look directly south of Hercules, almost to the horizon, to find the supergiant orange-red star Antares, the heart of Scorpius. Farther south and east of Antares, look for the creature's nasty hooked stinger.

THE TEAPOT

To the east of Scorpius but still well to the south, look for the outline of a teapot in the sky. The stars that make the teapot also make the eye, bow and arrow of Sagittarius, the Archer.



THE SUMMER SOLSTICE

Every day from late December to June, the Sun rises and sets a little farther north along the horizon. But about June 21, the Sun seems to stop moving north. It rises in the northeast and sets in the northwest, seemingly in the same spots for several days. After the pause, the Sun travels south to reach another standstill, or solstice, on or about December 21. Earth's elongated orbit around the Sun plus the tilt of Earth's axis produces the standstill effect. At each solstice, Earth is rounding one of the long ends of its orbit. As we swing around the end, neither Earth nor the Sun seems to move. The same standstill effect occurs when you toss a ball in the air. The ball seems to freeze at the top of your throw before it falls back down.