

The Starry Ring of Winter

Twenty winter stars visible in moonlight or light pollution

A: EIGHT BRIGHT NAMED STARS

Comprising the "Great Winter Ring!" that every ardent sky watcher should know. (Including seven of the twenty brightest stars in the night sky)

Star Name	Visual Brightness Ranking	Description
SIRIUS	#1	"Dog Star" Heart of Canis Major. The brightest nighttime star and the Lucida of Winter. White
BETELGEUSE	#9	Brighter, eastern shoulder of Orion. Inside the circle of "The Winter Ring." Red.
RIGEL	#7	Brighter, western foot of Orion, The Hunter. Blue.
ALDEBARAN	#14	North and West of Orion. Among The Hyades Star Cluster. The "Angry, Red Eye of the Bull."
CAPELLA	#6	Brightest Star of The Charioteer, "The Little She-Goat", north of Orion and Taurus. Yellow, like the Sun, but a giant star.
CASTOR	#23	Fainter, western star, showing the head(s) of The Twins, southeast of Capella and north of Procyon. Telescopic Triple. Blue-White.
POLLUX	#17	Brighter, eastern star showing the head(s) of Gemini, The Twins. Near Castor. Orange.
PROCYON	#8	The "Little Dog Star," Heart of Canis Minor. North of Sirius, east of Orion. White.

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B: 12 more stars visible in moonlight

1. Three stars important for orientation
2. Five fun stars in Orion
3. Four amusing stars in The Big Dog

Star Names	Visual Brightness Ranking	Description
MENKALINAN	#41	East of Capella. Part of The Winter Ring. Top-front of Chariot.
EL NATH	#27	South of Capella, not quite halfway to Betelgeuse. One horn of Taurus, The Bull.
ALHENA	#43	Northeast of Betelgeuse, not quite halfway to Pollux. Involved in a starchain Showing The Twins' feet.
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BELLATRIX	#26	Orion's fainter, western shoulder.
ALNITAK	#31	Orion's eastern (our left) belt star.
ALNILAM	#29	Orion's central belt star.
MINTAKA	#70	Orion's western (our right) belt star.
SAIPH	#51	Orion's fainter eastern foot.
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MIRZAM	#47	The Big Dog's front foot. West of Sirius.
WEZEN	#37	Big Dog's hip. South-southeast of Sirius.
ADHARA	#22	Back leg of Big Dog. Southwest of Wezen.
ALUDRA	#85	The tail of Big Dog. Southeast of Wezen.